

# IRELAND TO-DAY

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*Reviews by*: SHANE LESLIE, DR. O. SHEEHY SKEFFINGTON, DR. R. DUDLEY EDWARDS, JOHN MCCARTHY, SEAMUS PENDER, CAPT. JOHN LUCY, DR. A. J. LEVENTHAL, SEAN O MEADHRA, NIAL SHERIDAN, and others.

THE MONTH IN RETROSPECT .. DENIS BARRY

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All communications to be addressed to the Editorial and Publishing Offices, 49 Stafford Street, Dublin. Telephone: 22655

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## NOTES ON OUR CONTRIBUTORS

AN PHILIBIN, *the well-known pseudonym of Dr. John Pollock, the Dublin pathologist.*

PROF. MICHAEL TIERNEY, *Chair of Greek, University College, Dublin ; formerly deputy in Free State Parliament ; author of numerous monographs on political and cultural subjects and on Hellenic studies.*

C. C. CREMIN, M.A., B.COMM., *University College, Cork ; Diploma in Archaeology, Oxford ; took part in excavations within recent years at Ithaca, Perachora, and Astakos, and at Cush, Co. Limerick, 1934.*

T. F. HARVEY JACOB *gives the house agent's point of view on a subject much discussed from other angles.*

NIAL MONTGOMERY *has contributed with Denis Devlin to a collection of translations from the French, which will be a landmark in the field of translation into Irish.*

EDWARD SHEEHY, M.A., *student with social-cultural bias ; Editor of our Book Section.*

ERSKINE H. CHILDERS, *returned from Paris, 1932 ; helped to consolidate position of The Irish Press ; official of the two principal national industrial organisations ; on National Executive of Fianna Fail, Council of the Civics Institute, etc.*

ETHNA MCCARTHY, *granddaughter of Denis Florence McCarthy. Lectured in French and Provengal in Trinity College ; has published translations from Spanish poetry in The Dublin Magazine ; at present studying medicine.*

ROSAMOND JACOB, *author of two novels of Irish politico-social life, Callaghan and A Home Divided.*

The regular features are conducted by the Editors of the several sections.

<i>Foreign Commentary</i>	..	MICHAEL O'NEILL-KING.
<i>Art</i>	.. ..	.. JOHN DOWLING, B.A., B.D.S.
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## EDITORIAL

THE anniversary to be celebrated this month recalls an event that must be accounted the most significant in Ireland since the "conquest." Its significance is borne out by its ever-growing implications and its historical *sequelae*, of which acknowledgment by all parties, in England, in the North, in the South, is increasingly forthcoming. 1916, for all its apparent failure at the time, was undoubtedly, no matter to what political loyalties we subscribe, the first effective and successful turning point in the long story of subjugated Ireland. Its glory and its potency have been held to reside in its permanency, its very irreversibility. There can be no setting back of the clock.

But is there not a perhaps dangerous element of complacency in this belief? In countries where state policy has demanded the suppression of religion, since deification of the State was the aim and the impossibility of serving two masters rightly recognised, the frontal attack was on the schools. Elimination of instruction in religion was realised to be the most effective, and yet in its application the least positively hurtful, means of achieving that end. In other countries, whilst complete secularisation was not insisted upon, the degree of instruction was, by our standards, very low. Does it not follow likewise that in our country if the natural patriotic impulse of our young at school and university is to be suppressed by the use of inimical or outworn text-books and the almost complete neglect of respect for national symbols, there may be a danger of retrogression?

Some such fear seems to have been shared by the delegates of the recent first Convention of ex-I.R.A. men, who, contrary to the expectations that were bruited abroad beforehand, devoted a remarkably small proportion of their deliberations to mundane questions such as preference in the distribution of jobs and the increase and acceleration of military pension awards. With an extraordinary degree of solidarity and determination, the issues mainly discussed were (a) the obligation upon the present Government of the Twenty-Six counties portion of Ireland to secure a mandate from the people for the re-declaration of an All-Ireland Republic; (b) the attainment and defence of that Republic, and (c) the release of prisoners at present held, whose only crime is their loyalty to the declared Republic and their persistence in working to secure its recognition.

It is unfortunate, at a time when efforts are being made

both by the Government themselves, their left wing, as most of the Convention referred to above might be described, and their extreme opponents (differing only as to the method of implementing their professed common aims), to consolidate the national position against external pressure, that such a moment should be chosen by a distinguished preacher to add fuel to the flames. What with the steady percolation, and, within two decades only, the hammer-blow impact through foreign press, cinema, wireless and revolutionized transport, of the secular philosophy that is Westernisation, it is hard enough in all conscience to retain one's balance. How regrettable it is then to find national effort, regarded as a glorious heritage by at least sixty *per cent.* of the people of *all* Ireland, coupled and identified with anti-clericalism. Since not opposition to religion but to its ministers is charged, is there not here at least the suggestion of a case against the refusal of the clergy to align themselves with the nation's expressed will? A quotation, as reported in the press, might fitly be reproduced here.

"Here in this country anti-clericalism has at all times been rife, generally beneath the surface, occasionally in the open. It existed in the days of the Fenian movement and even earlier. It raised its head in the unhappy days of the Parnellite split, and it made itself felt as a sequel to events still closer to us. It is still with us to-day. Many even of the clergy are not aware of the bitter and rancorous tone used when they are discussed by professing Catholics in many a little gathering."

Charity towards those who are at least more than half with you is much needed. Abroad, our comprehension of what is what, is daily being more and more queered. And yet with just that little more of added complexity, clarification will come and is coming. The principal opponents at the moment of Spain's government and the majority of her people, are Italy and Germany. Who, here, can withhold sympathy from His Holiness the Pope who is confronted with an increasingly hostile Germany and an Italy that by its recently declared Islamic policy has torn away the last shreds of hypocritical defence for its Abyssinian invasion and brutal suppression? Social justice, charity, love of brother—cannot find entry into State counsels unless they are first enshrined in the hearts of the masses of their peoples.

Recent work on the incidence and eradication of a fowl eye



disease, trachoma, which is a direct cause of blindness, has brought to light particularly disturbing features for this country. It is hoped, in view of the already necessarily high cost of our social services, due to the disbalance in most of our demographic features since the "Famine" years, that immediate steps will be taken to reduce its incidence and finally eliminate the scourge altogether. Statistical examination showed with reasonable certainty that 18 *per cent.* of blindness here is due to this preventable cause whereas the corresponding figure for Scotland is only 0.1 *per cent.* On top of the humiliation of being shown in 'red' in the world's maps, we must figure prominently also as red in the trachoma-incidence map which graphically presented these results.

The change of heart that can come in fifteen short years was well exemplified at a meeting of a Presbyterian Association, when one of the leading members referred to the "Treaty" of 1921 as having no permanent binding force, and another, a minister, paid tribute to the son of an executed and unrepentant rebel—Erskine Childers, of immortal memory—welcoming him "for his own and for his father's sake." The pity of it all!

With no desire to be churlish or to belittle in any way the sincerity of such speakers, the thought cannot be repressed how much agony we could be spared, did only people appraise values truly in a less time. What key—an educated public opinion seems hardly adequate, but perhaps an ever-active spiritual consciousness and criticism of self before others—can open the unfolding years with a greater assurance of vindication of actions already done?

Can IRELAND TO-DAY in any degree help to promote that understanding which will prevent the loosing of unreason in times of stress? Can it strengthen spiritual concepts and add to their weight? Can it give room to those *imponderabilia* which our material times crush underfoot? If it can do any of these things, however inadequately, some cultural influence near to the head of the State should secure its endowment as an institution that will help Ireland more than its mere cost. This thought occurs to us on reading of King Carol's "Royal Cultural Foundation," which with the object of raising the standards of his people subsidises and actually publishes literary and scientific works, organises concerts and holds art exhibitions. "The Royal Foundation Review" most nearly corresponds to "Ireland To-Day"; it is Rumania's most serious and political monthly.

## FOREIGN COMMENTARY

NON-INTERVENTION in Spain has become a fact—many people will think it is a case of closing the meadow gate after the horse has got in ; but although the foreign element present on both sides is likely to have a very considerable influence on the ultimate issue, the enforcement of the agreement more easily permits a conjecture as to the probable outcome of the struggle and as to the form of Government which a once-more pacific Spain is likely to show. There is much to be said for the view that victory is now in Franco's reach and only awaits grasping. At present he controls the larger proportion of central Spain, both in actual area and as represented by population. The capture of Madrid would have merely a moral value, which, however, would be of the utmost significance and probably decisive for the course of the war. Catalonia, of course, remains in Government control and may, in the event of a Franco victory, continue to do so for a long time after the war should have come to a nominal close. There is evidence that Franco is well consolidating the territory he has won, and the fact that he is able to do so speaks much for the success of his policy. Government territory, on the other hand, seems to be in a disorganised condition.

Franco has had the initiative from the beginning and that fact alone has militated strongly against any kind of definite co-ordination in the Government sector. While the greater part of the Spanish news carried by foreign papers is anything but reliable, there seems good reason to believe that the Government forces, both military and civil, have been subject to serious strains caused by disunity and lack of co-operation. All reports are at one in attributing a very large part of the successful resistance to Franco's protracted onslaught on Madrid to the foreign contingent. All reports, again, have been at one in asserting that Caballero, and different members of his cabinet have, from time to time, had to issue appeals for unity even in the field.

Government supporters vary from staunch bourgeois Republicans like Prieto and Azana to extreme Reds, whose apostle is Trotsky. It may be assumed that the Frente Popular is no exception to the general rule, that the more extreme element tends to impose its nature on the whole. In February a party



of French radicals, returned from a tour of the Government sector had some illuminating remarks to make on the condition of things which they found there. Briefly they bore witness that disunion was rampant and that the manner in which the redistribution of property was taking place, apart from not being according to the book, was likely to prove disastrous.

\* \* \*

A victory for the Franco party has, of course, long ago been condemned by all to whom the term Fascism is anathema. The supporters of both parties have emphasised *ad nauseam* that the Spaniard is a law unto himself and unlike any citizen to be found elsewhere. While that is one of the exaggerations to be avoided it should by now be clear that Fascism is an omnibus expression generally applied disparagingly to any régime whose organisation is from the top down, and which introduces legal compulsion into phases of life considered, prior to the emergence of that form of Government, as free from state interference. It does not need pointing out that the conception of what is and what is not legitimate state interference differs at the longest from generation to generation. It is obvious too that for Italy Fascism has achieved, from the purely material point of view, what the Parliamentaryism that existed there at the end of the war could not have aspired to. The important point, however, is that at this date it is very doubtful if the Italian worker is any worse off either materially or intellectually than he would be under even successful communism. Emphasis on the military side of politics is the particular red rag of Fascist clothing to the opponent of the system. When, however, it is urged that communism is in fact, as exemplified by Russia, quite as militaristic in its preparations as Fascism and, if the London Soviet ambassador's speech of the middle of March is to be taken as typical, just as junker, the answer is given that that is due to circumstances. It would be interesting to hear how, for instance, Italy, whose history certainly teaches a strong lesson of the desirability of military preparedness and which, of course, arose as the result of a war, can find circumstances so pliant as to enable her to carry on as a demilitarised power. One is sometimes driven to suspect that Mussolini's most serious crime in the eyes of his opponents is that he is a renegade from the most pacific form of socialism, for which he one time suffered imprisonment.

Should victory fall to the Government forces it is not unlikely that an extension of the Russian experiment may be anticipated.

The report of the Anglican Churchmen, referred to in these pages last month, gives some idea of the extent to which feeling for their traditional religion maybe expected to restrain violent change ; and the English papers carried many protests against the "inadequacy" and understatement of that report. If the religious motive for restraint is eliminated an extreme left policy would seem to be the natural issue ; and a revulsion against any form of religious discipline would seem to be the logical reaction for victors over Franco who has, so far as can be judged, the free support of the Church in Spain.

\* \* \*

The French Government's loan, issued on terms exceptionally favourable to the investor, has been a success. Its issue and the propaganda which preceded it, well illustrate the extent to which modern Governments are dependent for their success on their relations with other countries. It has been stated in so many words that self-sufficiency, which was the alternative before Blum to a slowing up in the rate of enforcement of his programme, would have displeased America and England, and was, therefore, not a practical policy. That Blum has chosen the second alternative no more means that he has abandoned his programme, than does the fact that some weeks ago he decreed para-military training of all boys from the age of 8 to 18 that he has become a "fascist." Both mean that he has bowed to inevitable circumstance, and, happily for him, has sufficient influence in France to be able to do so without political disaster to himself. Foreign policy has always been a strong point with France. The continued tenure of office of M. Blum's Government has enabled the major policy chosen by that Government, of which the three-power currency pact of September with Great Britain and the U.S.A. is the best index, to develop. It is doubtful if at any time previously the external policy of Britain and France coincided more than at present. A certain amount of discrepancy is inevitable because of France's penchant for a large sphere of influence in central and southern Europe, and England's unwillingness to undertake all the commitments which such a policy on her part would involve. But that is just the important difference which unites allies. Belgium has, it would seem, come more into line with the wishes of France, which has postponed for a year the extension of the Maginot line to cover the Franco-Belgian frontier. It is thus likely that the three western "Locarno Powers" are in a somewhat similar position vis-à-vis Germany and the proposed



western Pact, as they were in April of last year when the negotiations covered by the British memorandum, to which the Germans have recently sent a reply, were broken off.

\* \* \*

That the German reply to the British memorandum denotes Germany's intention of coming into line should not certainly be assumed. She has refused an invitation to sit on the committee at present investigating at Geneva the question of the better distribution of raw materials, although it was, if not expressly, at least largely as a result of her claims, fully repeated recently by the German Ambassador to London at the opening of the Leipzig Fair, that the deliberations were initiated. Nevertheless, the conference promises to be in many ways of outstanding importance as it differs from what, though confined in area, were in effect similar conferences, such as that which distributed Africa in the last century and the more recent division of China into spheres of influence, in that countries other than the great and colonial powers are represented at it. It was preceded by a meeting of the Scandinavian and smaller Northern European "neutral" countries whose announcement of their agreement on the subject of the reduction of trade barriers may be taken as a good augury for success in the larger field.

MICHAEL O'NEILL-KING

## THE FOURTH FIELD

Out of the sour ground  
Where dour stones abound,  
Spare, bitter thistles rear  
Barbed stems in the bleak air,  
Where the starved plovers cry,  
Under a pallid sky,  
Their pitiful despair.

Yet every plant, hard-grown,  
Carries a purple crown,  
Spoiled by a pilfering bee  
In sparse felicity,  
To carry to his hive  
Built in cold stone, and thrive  
In teeth of the harsh sea.

An eastern field is sweet  
Of soil, to breed clean wheat :  
A meadow to the south  
Yields yellow hay in drouth :  
The western pasture feeds  
Black cattle : here, rank weeds  
Hold honey for my mouth.

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## *IRELAND IN THE EUROPEAN CHAOS*

It used to be supposed that Ireland, lying far from the centres of European life, must necessarily be also somewhat remote from European ideas. We all know that the tremendous upheaval of the Renaissance only affected us in a very indirect, if by no means feeble fashion ; and during the past century or so our energies have been so concentrated on our secular dispute for sovereignty with England that, on the whole, we have had little time for the vaguer, though louder, disputes that have raged over the Continent. Our remoteness was and is, in a sense, to be regretted, and there are those who think that what we now need most of all is a generous inflow of European thought. Perhaps it is partly an inevitable result of self-government that we have in fact already begun to acquire something of a cosmic consciousness. There are many kinds of thrill to be got out of participation in the disputes that agitate the great world outside our shores. It adds to our sense of our own importance, and the fury of the foreign combatants helps to warm our blood. Perhaps it is even healthy for us to forget our own disputes in the larger issues that press upon us from every side.

At the same time there is some room for the diffident suggestion that over-indulgence in this particular form of excitement has its peculiar dangers. A wag has defined the drunkard as the man who cannot take a drink. In the same way the strong wine of world political controversy demands a strong political head. Ireland is not distinguished by its capacity for coherent political theory, even where its own comparatively simple affairs are concerned. We know little enough of our own history, but we know far less of the very complicated background that lies behind the present European chaos. Our national tendency to hit first and think afterwards is a grave weakness in our own politics ; it might conceivably be entirely disastrous if we let ourselves be too excited by the politics of

other nations. There is the further point that we have enough to do for a very long time in the unification of Ireland and in the working out of a political system that will suit our very peculiar history and conditions, while protecting ourselves at the same time against the growing dangers of Americanisation and Anglicisation, without turning ourselves into a kind of Aeolian harp to be played on by all the winds of political doctrine, from whatever quarter they may blow.

One curious result of our premature immersion in extrinsic doctrines is a tendency to forget the facts that stare us in the face at home. I offer two examples of this tendency, out of many. The first is the continually-repeated suggestion that proportional representation is a genuine corrective for the admitted shortcomings of the English parliamentary system, which practically everyone, in the true English spirit, identifies with democracy. Our experience in Ireland, which by this time is fairly exhaustive, has been that proportional representation is strictly irrelevant at best, if it does not indeed intensify the evils it so persuasively offers to cure. The second example is that of the social theorists, of whom we have not a few, who denounce the results of capitalism in Ireland and put forward distributism, on the Chestertonian model, as their antidote. It is true that capitalism, in a very special form, has played its part in the creation of Irish poverty and in Ireland's general economic backwardness. But it is also true that for the last quarter of a century at least Ireland has been the scene of perhaps the most remarkable experiment in distributism that western Europe has known since the French Revolution ; that this experiment has had far-reaching effects on every part of our economic system ; and that it has up to the present signally failed to solve the very problems for whose solution it is now recommended. Landlordism has been abolished, but our population continues to decline ; emigration, checked in one direction, assumes alarming proportions in another ; while our urban proletariat seems to grow continuously at the expense of our



countryside. The trouble about all such ready-made slogans as these is that they render cool and purposive self-criticism impossible. We are carried away on a flood of high-sounding promises for reform before we even know for certain that reform is necessary and before we get a chance to consider whether the particular reform so loudly recommended has in fact a meaning for our conditions.

This incoherence is often harmless enough and even amusing in that it feeds our national propensity to argue. It becomes dangerous when manifested in the sphere of revolutionary political doctrines which have already set whole continents by the ears. I would beg all Irish Catholic Nationalists, before they engage themselves too deeply in warfare, wordy or otherwise, on behalf of any fashionable ideal—communism, fascism, nazism, democratic solidarity, collective security, the rights of nationalities, the struggle of the workers, the popular front, anti-imperialism, or the hundred and one similar causes that are daily hawked in the newspapers and on the radio—to bethink them where exactly they stand, precisely as Irish Catholic nationalists. These two adjectives and this noun imply not only a consistent set of principles in relation to present circumstances, but a historical tradition which is peculiar to Ireland and a historic task which can only be worked out within Ireland in Irish terms. Irish Catholic nationalists should be as well able to think for themselves as anybody else. If they are not, there is one proposition of which they may be absolutely certain: nobody else, whether English, Russian, German, Italian, or even Spanish, is going to do their thinking for them.

Dr. George O'Brien, in his *Four Green Fields*, has clearly established two fundamental facts for Irishmen, one relating to the past and the other to the future. The first is that the peculiar history of religion and nationality in Ireland has produced a union between the two out of which has been born a third—democracy. We have no need of propagandists from Paris, London, or Geneva, to defend democracy among us, or

to tell us where it is weak, or to dose it with collective security or proportional representation. Irish democracy is the healthy offspring of Irish Catholicism and Irish nationalism ; it has been able to fend for itself in the past without much aid from anyone else, and is likely to do so in the future. Where it is weak at the present moment is precisely in its unnatural union with English parliamentary methods and procedure. The English parliamentary system has given England an economic oligarchy, and in Ireland it threatens to establish on a permanent and virulent basis the divisions of opinion that are natural to us, but that could be directed in a healthier and more Irish way. Democracy in this country is more in danger from the party system working through parliament than from either nazism, communism, or any other "ism." It needs correction, not through any devices learned from the League of Nations, but through a return to Irish traditions and methods.

The second fact established by Dr. O'Brien, and regularly forgotten by most of us, is that the great historic task of Irishmen is the ending of partition and the uniting of Ireland. I do not agree with the frequently-expressed view that the greatest obstacle to the performance of that task is "the existence in the Free State of a large party which is separatist and anti-British." I think it is rather the failure of Irish nationalists to agree on a coherent or intelligent line of national policy, whether that line be separatist or dominionist. Either policy, if we were agreed on it, might succeed ; it is quite certain that a fifty-fifty division between two contradictory policies cannot succeed. Both our great parties, to my mind, are at fault in this respect : the Government party, because they have merely used separatism as a means for party advantage, the opposition because they have clung since 1932 to the dead letter of an irrelevant dominionism. At present the division is three-quarters unreal, and it would pay all nationalists better to work for the country's escape from this unreality than to bedevil the situation with further unrealities like agitation



about the recognition or non-recognition of this or that government in Spain. It is an axiom, inexorable as any law of nature, that without unity among Irish nationalists there can be no union of Ireland.

Irish Catholicism, Irish nationalism, and their joint offspring. Irish democracy—these must provide between them the solid ground on which alone we can stand if we are to move our own world or have any influence on the world outside ourselves. What gives the present state of opinion in Ireland its peculiar, and to my mind its transitory, character, is the fact that we are continually being asked to concentrate on one of them to the neglect of the others. Advice is being daily offered to us which amounts to suggesting that we should be Catholics without being Irish or nationalists or democrats, or that we should be nationalists without being Catholics, or democrats without being Catholic or Irish. What is oddest about the whole situation is the very unexpected ideological alliances it seems now and again to produce. Excessive concentration on Abyssinia or the sufferings of German Jews causes Irishmen whose whole past record is one of uncompromising anti-British feeling and behaviour to line up with English conservatives in a struggle whose front always has room for energumens of every nation. Excessive sympathy for the victims of capitalist oppression sends Irishmen whose own brand of home politics has close similarities with that of Hitler, to become enthusiasts for the international unity of the proletariat. Fears for the dubious future of democracy in Rumania, Czecho-Slovakia or Yugoslavia turns pious Catholics into life-and-death upholders of the treaty of Versailles, that creation of a very un-Roman triumvirate, Wilson, Clemenceau, and Lloyd George. The permutations and combinations are endless, and it only needed the Spanish tragedy to raise them to a very delirium of complexity.

It is perhaps difficult for the average Irishman, faced with such a tempting variety of causes lost and otherwise, to keep from throwing his own hat into the ring, especially if the gesture

affords an opportunity for a good hearty row with another Irishman. Restraint, however, is a virtue whose value is greatly enhanced by responsibility. We should never forget that our task in Ireland is only half done as yet, and that at any moment the exciting game of argument and counter-argument may turn into a universal catastrophe in which our survival as an independent people will be at stake as much as that of others. Not once only within the past twelve months has the world been on the very edge of such a catastrophe. Every indication by which sane men can be guided points to the great probability of a new and fiercer European war before many years are past. Once it comes, ideologies and slogans will make way, as they have always done in war, for brute force. It is vital to our security and our hopes for the future that we should face the crisis when it comes, with clear heads and united wills. Our whole purpose in it should be bent on the securing, or at least the bringing nearer, of a united Irish state, in which Catholicism, nationalism, and democracy shall be supreme. There is every danger of that purpose being confused, and of the crisis being turned for us into a ghastly tragedy instead of an opportunity, if we let ourselves be carried off our feet beforehand by any slogans or catch-cries of foreign manufacture. By foreign I mean, of course, not merely European, but English as well; and there is a sense, obviously indicated by our essential Catholicism, in which English ideas are in fact more foreign to us than many others. We must be implicated, as far as in us lies, in no more wars to end war or wars for democracy or for any of the other high-sounding ideals in which war-propaganda is so fruitful. Our course, above all in war-time, must be one of "sacred egoism."

An attitude of critical and almost cynical detachment is the soundest for all Irishmen to adopt in face of the complex struggle for position in the next great war now going on in Europe. This struggle is frequently represented to us as a struggle between two ideologies, Fascism and Communism; and as a



way of escape from both we are offered adherence to the ideals of the League of Nations, democracy, the rule of law, and collective security. Now the whole of this picture is deeply vitiated by propaganda of various kinds. There is no real dilemma as between Fascism and Communism, and the way of escape is itself completely off the true path of Irish nationalism, defined as I have defined it. Communism is indeed a very definite creed, which does offer itself for acceptance by the whole world in the form of a social revolution. But its so-called opponent, Fascism, is merely a label affixed for convenience of propaganda to a wide variety of doctrines and systems, none of which in fact does offer itself as a creed for the world, and least of all for us in Ireland. No more fatal mistake could be made than to suppose that there is anything like identity between the régimes now prevailing in Italy and Germany, or between either or both and those prevailing in Austria, Poland, or Portugal, or that which the insurgents are trying to establish in Spain. The attempt to confuse them all is being made in part by the spokesmen of Russia and in part by the propagandists who are once more rallying to prepare British public opinion for a new war on the Continent. Recent utterances by veteran English publicists like Sir Bernard Pares and Mr. Wickham Steed are highly significant of the turn of events. Sir Bernard Pares was an expert on Russian affairs during the war of 1914-18, and for long after the revolution a violent opponent of Bolshevism. His visits to Russia during the past two years, followed by his elaborate defence of Stalin in the English press, can have only one meaning for the discerning mind. It is simply that Stalinist Russia is once again destined to play the part of steamroller in the likely event of an attempt by Hitler to upset the balance of power in Eastern Europe. Mr. Wickham Steed was during the great war a disciple of Lord Northcliffe, England's greatest propagandist, and afterwards Editor of the *Times*. If he now lectures the Royal Institute of International Affairs \* on "the

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\* *International Affairs*, March-April, 1937.

anti-Bolshevik Front," and suggests, without the shadow of a proof, that there is a league between the Vatican, Italy, and Germany, the meaning is to be found less in his passion for historical veracity than in the exigencies of British policy. The same sort of team-work that produced the infamous, "Casement diaries," is being set in motion in good time once more.

There is no sympathy among Irish nationalists for either Bolshevism or Hitlerism. The reason is perfectly simple. It is that the first is blatantly anti-religious, the second only apparently less so for tactical reasons. What is essential to Marxian communism is not theories about surplus-value or sympathy for the oppressed, but a most radical and thorough-going materialism. To the Marxist, human beings are only raw material for economic forces, and the deaths of millions are of no more significance than the cutting down of so many trees. Men are just conglomerations of matter, differing only from wood and stone in the proportion in which their ingredients are mixed. The famous dialectic gives this doctrine a kind of intellectual complexity which looks imposing, but in its fundamentals it is strikingly similar to the official Nazi doctrine that the ultimate reality is the blood inherited by one generation from another. There is something piquant about the adoption by the Russians of a peculiarly German professorial system of ideas, while the native land of Marx and Engels has fallen back on a very simple mysticism of race whose "third Reich" reminds us of the old Muscovite "third Rome." This swapping of ideas does not affect their essential kinship. Both are typical products of nineteenth century materialism, and as such totally foreign to the native Irish mind—far more so, indeed, than the native Irishman always realises himself.

The systems in vogue in Italy, Austria, Poland, and Portugal, on the other hand, are systems that have either grown up in or been adapted to a Catholic environment, and as such differ entirely from both Bolshevism and Hitlerism. It is true that Mussolini began as a socialist and that a good deal of his



"statism" was inspired by Hegel, from whom Marx derived part of his own doctrine. This accounts for the early tension between the Vatican and Fascism. Nevertheless, there is every indication that Mussolini has moved away from his original absolutism and towards a more Catholic view of society. It would be folly to assume that he has moved all the way, but the sole fact that the Pope, who is not famous for lack of courage, has reached a successful accommodation with the Fascist state is enough to give any Catholic Irishman pause before lumping Italian Fascism with totally unacceptable systems. It could not be transplanted to Ireland, because Ireland is fundamentally democratic. But not wanting a thing for yourself is not a reason for condemning that thing and still less for helping others; who have their own game to play, in destroying it. The same surely applies to Austria, Poland, Portugal, and to the prospective nationalist régime in Spain. The problems of these countries are fortunately not ours; but before we condemn their way of doing things on grounds which in the last analysis are moral grounds, we should be very careful about the sources from which we draw our moral ideas.

I suggest that too many of us are inclined to draw them from the legalistic sources opened up by the League of Nations. We should be more circumspect than we always are about the League's own moral credentials. The fact that we have become members of it for our own purposes has changed neither our nature and our responsibilities nor those of others. To me at any rate, who am neither Fascist, Bolshevik, nor British publicist, there is a lot about the League which is very questionable indeed. In spite of high professions, it has been worked very much as an instrument of the powers who won the war. It has failed very largely because its practice has been in such flagrant contradiction to these professions. It is now the instrument of France, England and Russia, none of whom can by any means claim any right to act as moral arbiter for mankind. The small powers who are associated with them are for the most

part powers which owe their existence to the Allied victory in 1918, like Czecho-Slovakia, or did very well out of it, like Rumania. Those Irishmen, like myself, who never had any particular belief in the justice of the Allies' cause or in their high moral pretensions, can hardly be expected to enthuse now over what is left of their short-lived achievement. They have alienated Italy, destroyed Austria, and driven defeated Germany to the point of distraction at which it has become once more formidable. Nothing is more significant of their mentality, which is as much alive to-day as ever, than the venom with which they concentrated on the dismemberment of the Austro-Hungarian state, to a very large degree simply because it was Catholic. Bismarck's Germany, which they left intact, is now rising again, more autocratic and more militarist than ever. Let us in Ireland not be deluded once more into being "the one bright spot" in a war for little Czecho-Slovakia or little anywhere else. A bright spot, by all means ; but may our light shine first and last upon ourselves.

MICHAEL TIERNEY



## ARCHAEOLOGY AND HISTORY

*"In every country enlightened by civilisations and confirmed therein through successive generations it has been customary to record the events produced by time . . . that posterity might be informed how their forefathers have employed their time, how long they continued in power, and how they have finished their days." Extract from dedication to Ferall O'Gara prefixed to Annals of the Four Masters and signed by Brother Michael O'Cleary, August the 8th, 1936 (pp. ix. ff. of O'Donovan's introduction to Vol. I. (1851)).*

*"When a thing is old, broken, and useless, we throw it on the dust-heap, but when it is sufficiently broken and sufficiently useless, we give money for it, put it into a museum and read papers over it which people come long distances to hear."—SAMUEL BUTLER.*

THE announcement in the Irish press of last month by the Commissioners of Public Works of the desirability of preserving intact those heaps of stones occurring throughout the countryside, which might seem to have been placed for a utilitarian purpose in their present position by a particularly benign providence, must have read strangely to many. A glance at the statute-book would, however, reveal that in 1930 an Act was passed with the object of safeguarding these monuments "the preservation of which is a matter of national importance by reason of the historical, architectural, traditional, artistic or archaeological importance attaching thereto." This Act was but the counterpart for Ireland of legislation already passed by most European countries. Herr Hitler, in informing the International Olympic Committee on the 1st August, 1936, of his intention to have the excavations begun at Olympia in 1875 "continued and completed," added that the consent of the Greek Government to that project had been obtained. The object of these excavations, as stated by the German Chancellor, is "to restore to modern humanity a sanctuary of ancient civilization." That is but one side of the matter. A definition of the other side would cover the whole field of archaeology,

Archaeology in the widest sense of the word is the science of the past. More particularly it may be defined as that branch

of learning which is concerned with everything of a concrete nature which may throw light on the origins, history, manner of life, institutions and cultural attainments of a people. It is only in quite recent times that archaeology has attained the status of a distinct science. What is now the province of the archaeologist was, prior to the middle of the last century, the common hunting-ground of a number of different categories of quasi-scientific investigators, especially of the ethnologist, the anthropologist and the antiquarian, the latter generally a dilettante of very varied interests with a bias towards objects of art. Great names in some of these subjects which would now be classified as coming within the province of archaeology proper are those of men whose interest was at bottom quite different from that of the modern worker in the same field. Winckelmann's studies in Greek and Roman sculpture were primarily a work of artistic appreciation; Hamilton, British Ambassador at Naples towards the end of the eighteenth century, some of whose huge accumulation of Greek vases had gone to enrich the British Museum, was essentially a collector; no Greek would admit that Lord Elgin, of Parthenon, fame, British Envoy to the Porte, 1803, was inspired with archaeological fervour. The main difference between such enthusiasts and the modern archaeologist properly so called is that the former made their study to a very large extent as an end in itself, and not with any intention of further applying the results obtained; the latter uses the results obtained from a particular study for the purpose of illuminating something else.

Although only of comparatively recent growth the science of archaeology has already arrived at a point where its main lines are fairly clearly defined and where its further development is likely to be rather in the direction of a greater refinement of the already recognised main divisions and classifications of the objects of study than in the unanticipated realisation of the importance of some hitherto neglected material. A good illustration of the distinction here implied may be provided by



the difference between the excavation carried out at Troy some sixty years ago by Heinrich Schliemann and that at present being made on the same site by representatives of an American University. Schliemann, who was bent solely on proving the historicity of the Homeric poems and ignorant of archaeological method, was more concerned with discovering traces of a settlement which could be equated with Homer's Ilium than in establishing the exact date and sequence of the various settlements which, in fact, came to light. In arriving at what he took to be his objective he ignored and destroyed irreplaceable evidence indispensable to a full history of the site. The present excavation on the relics of the site is being conducted with unwonted care and with no desire to reach a pre-conceived conclusion.

Everybody is aware that archaeologists excavate. While the actual excavation is in progress all attention is concentrated on seeing that the exact location in relation to its surroundings of everything found or observed, and of no matter how little apparent importance at the time, is recorded. It may be generally taken as true that, on any site of any appreciable depth, that which occurs below (immediately above virgin soil) is earlier than that higher up.<sup>1</sup> It will be obvious that that rule is of the greatest utility in establishing the priority of one object to another. Careful excavation is, therefore, of the highest importance: it is all the more important in that the excavator in exploring a site and in the process of obtaining evidence it has to offer toward evaluating the site, destroys for all time one of the prime aids to such evaluation: that furnished by stratification. While it is not improbable that

<sup>1</sup> Exceptions to this rule may occur, generally through a disturbance of the site in past centuries at the hand of man: the architects of the Augustan age who, to provide a mark of their emperor's claim to be descended from the Trojan prince, Aeneas, added to the buildings at Troy, and in preparing the ground for their foundations, cut off from the top of the hill that layer (as well as two later ones) which represented the remains of the city in which Aeneas dwelt! The material cut off showed an inverted stratification. At Sparta, excavation revealed a confusion in strata levels due to the shifting of some of the early deposit in later (Greek) times. (The Sanctuary of Artemis Orthia, pp. r ff.; *Journal of Hellenic Studies*, 1930, pp. 333 ff.). Portion of a stratified deposit, taken from the raised beach at Larne, is exhibited in a wall-case in the Irish Antiquities division of the National Museum.

several sites of a particular type will occur in any large region, nevertheless carelessness in the excavation of a particular site on the assumption that such probability is a fact is dangerous ; clearly the time will eventually come when the number of sites of a similar nature is exhausted. Some sites are of such a nature that exact parallels are not to be expected ; *e.g.*, Troy, Mycenae, Tel-el-Amara, Hallstatt, Tara.

While, however, excavation is at present one of the functions of the archaeologist and of prime importance to him in his work, it does not in itself by any means represent his only interest, nor is it of interest to him alone. Some persons, in particular those whose main pre-occupation is of an artistic nature, have no further interest in an excavation once it is completed and whatever objects the site may have concealed are in the light of day.<sup>1</sup> To the archaeologist, however, excavation is only a means to an end. As soon as the excavation is over the work of co-ordinating the results obtained, and classifying the objects found, begins. A distinction may here be noted which is as yet not a fact but tends more and more to become one, *viz.*, the existence of two types of archaeologist who may colloquially be described by the terms " field " and " arm-chair." The field archaeologist is primarily concerned with excavation, of which something has already been said. Theoretically an ideal excavator need know almost nothing of the precise significance of the objects excavated provided he is aware of the fact that they are significant. The arm-chair archaeologist, who works on the material brought to light, is complementary to his colleague in the field. It would be incorrect, however, to press the distinction, as the nature of the study, which is the common pre-occupation of both, and in particular the very various considerations which have to be

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<sup>1</sup> It may be noted in this connection that excavation has conclusively proved that there is one important factor which must be taken into account in the purely artistic appreciation of ancient sculpture, and consequently of much post-Renaissance sculpture which is definitely imitative of the Greek, *i.e.*, the fact that all ancient statuary was painted : it is very probable that the painting of Catholic church statuary is derived from the Greek practice.



taken into account in pursuing that study make it unlikely that the distinction will ever become a rigid one. Nevertheless the existence of the tendency cannot be denied, and though the differentiation of function may not meet with approval from all, there are very good reasons for its occurrence.

The objects of study of archaeology have in general become so numerous that, if full value is to be extracted from them, specialisation is, in some degree, varying with the nature and climate of the country covered, essential. Such objects are, or may be, in detail, pottery (or 'ware' which is practically indestructible), terracotta, sculpture, mineral and vase painting and decoration, painting substances, furniture and utensils, jewellery, weapons and implements, buildings and general architectural features, charred remains, tombs and modes of burial, glass, metals, bones, flints and stones.

In some countries a single excavation produces such an abundance of finds that their classification and the deduction from them of all the information they have to give would, if not completely overwhelm, at any rate require the full time over many years of any one man. That is particularly so in the countries of Southern Europe and the Near or Middle East. On the other hand, excavation in most North European countries (and in particular in Ireland) does not produce any such embarrassing wealth of objects. At the same time excavation is not by any means the only way by which the objects of archaeological study are provided. A building above ground for whose elucidation excavation is not required is equally an object of archaeological study with, for example, a souterrain. Apart, however, from such an obvious instance of the type of object coming within the province of archaeology and not originating in excavation, to anyone familiar with the National Museum the point made will be obvious. By far the greater portion of the objects of a Celtic nature there exhibited came, not from excavation, in any scientific sense of the word, but as the result of haphazard discovery in bogs and fields throughout.

the country. These objects are just as much the study of the archaeologist as objects of a like nature found in scientific excavation, and, except in one important respect, of exactly the same value as excavated objects.<sup>1</sup>

The respect in which objects found haphazard differ from those excavated is that the latter are known to have been found in a particular place and context. Of itself, however, the mere knowledge that a particular object is found in a particular place and context is, while possibly of very great interest to students of special subjects (such as household utensils, modes of dress), of minor importance to the archaeologist. It is only when an object, of whatever nature, is brought into relation with another in some manner similar, found elsewhere, that it may be said to acquire archaeological utility. The similarity between such objects may lie either in the objects as a whole, or in a number, or any of their component parts. Instances of objects possessing the former kind of similarity are bronze leaf-shaped swords that occur over the whole area from Ireland to Egypt. Examples of objects of Celtic and Irish origin to which, taken as a whole, no exact parallel (as yet) exists, but which, in the detail of their ornamentation, immediately come into relation with other objects found elsewhere, are two bronze jugs in the British Museum<sup>2</sup> and the whole genus of Irish reliquaries. The former, of Graeco-Etruscan shape, are very elaborately decorated in a style which is pre-eminently Celtic in its love of colour and its flamboyance. The fact that they are, hitherto, unique would, at first glance, make them archaeologically useless. A detailed analysis of their ornamentation (which shows an admixture of Greek, South Russian, Iranian, Etruscan, and North Italian elements), coupled with knowledge of their Celtic origin, has, however, enabled far-reaching chronological conclusions to be drawn as to the line followed by the Celts in their wanderings in Europe before dispersing to their ultimate homes. The

<sup>1</sup> The question of genuineness is not dealt with here : in that regard the scientifically excavated object has a definite advantage over one whose provenance is not known.

<sup>2</sup> Cambridge Ancient History, Plates III., p. 34 (Archaeological LXXIX. pp. 1 ff.).

Irish reliquaries, besides being dateable and illustrating certain passages in early Christian writers, serve, through their style of decoration, to show the spread of Irish workmanship on the Continent in the Christian era.

The real importance of the fact of an object being found in scientific excavation is that it serves as a foundation for dating, not only and immediately, other objects of a comparable nature, but, it may be, in the long run, the whole archaeological system of a country. Two chief methods of dating in archaeology, though they frequently interact, may be distinguished. The one and the most obvious, which may be called the practical method, is that got from an excavated site where (*v. supra*) the objects on top are later than those below. The interval in time between objects found in any such relative position may, obviously, be great or small.<sup>2</sup> However, a large number of careful excavations will eventually lead to a fairly complete series of any particular category arranged in chronological sequence being established. The other method, which may be described as theoretical and which, while not as secure as the first, is nevertheless tolerably reliable, is that whereby objects of a similar class, whether found in excavation or not, are arranged by analysis of shape, style and content in a typological sequence. In applying the latter method, certain assumptions are made whose validity can be proved from the artistic development noticeable in works of known date (e.g., early Christian, mediaeval and post-mediaeval continental sculpture and painting) but which could scarcely be made with any safety by an archaeologist of, say, the year 3000 A.D. engaged in the study of the period covered by the late nineteenth and the twentieth centuries. The chief of those assumptions is that artistic development is in the nature of a more or less continuous progress from the primitive, through the stylised to the

<sup>1</sup> Margaret Stokes "Early Christian Art in Ireland," pp. 54 ff. (1932 ed.).

<sup>2</sup> In some instances (as e.g. at Cnossos in Crete—Sir A. Evans "Palace of Minos," Vol. I., p. 34 n. 4) the thickness of a deposit on a site has been used to date the material found: such a method can only be employed with the greatest caution and the result obtained could not be considered very secure.



mature and on to the decadent, where stylisation again predominates. Either method requires, to be of use, an absolute date expressed in terms comprehensible to the students. There are, for instance, certain civilisations, in particular that of the Maya, which flourished in central America prior to the arrival of the Spaniards, which have left behind monuments whose date can be fixed to the day in accordance with the chronological system used by their makers but where, owing to our inability fully to understand that system, the same monuments are given, in terms of our reckoning, widely fluctuating dates. On the other hand the upper limit in many countries of the stone, bronze and iron ages, chronological expressions familiar to most people, cannot as yet be definitely fixed.

Once, however, an absolute date does become available, either through the discovery of material of a particular series on a site whose date is firmly and narrowly fixed on historical grounds (*e.g.*, Minoan pottery and Tel-el-Amara), or through the occurrence among excavated material of that series of an object of known date (*e.g.*, a coin, an Egyptian scarab) or whose date because of the object belonging to an already dated series, may be taken as known (*e.g.*, the occurrence on an Irish site of a glass bead of foreign manufacture and the converse case of a halberd of Irish type found in the sixth shaft-grave at Mycenae<sup>1</sup>) the series may, to some extent at least, be dated in terms of years. The ideal would, of course, be that the first, last and any intermediate point in a given series could be dated in that manner.

Absolute dating is of the utmost importance to archaeology and may be considered as the ultimate function of the study. To take an extreme case the full significance of the excavations in Crete in the past forty years or of the greater portion of the objects in the National Museum would be lost unless we had some idea as to the period to which they belong. Once date has been established we may then proceed to draw those conclusions the provision of which is the end to which all archaeol-

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<sup>1</sup> Sir A. Evans "Palace of Minos," Vol. II., pp. 1, pp. 170 ff.

ogical study should strive. That end may be defined as the illumination or provision of history. In Ireland the beginning of the historic period, in the sense of that period covered by reliable written documents, may be put at about the birth of Christ.<sup>1</sup> Prior to that date, however, events of the greatest significance for the subsequent history of this country had taken place. Some of these events are covered by references, frequently of a legendary character, preserved in the Irish annals and elsewhere. Archaeology is capable of checking the accuracy of those references and of throwing a very strong light on all the more important movements and events of the periods to which they relate.<sup>2</sup> The history of the Celtic peoples as it may now be read in any up-to-date work dealing with the subject has been largely reconstructed from the archaeological evidence.<sup>3</sup> From the culture common to these peoples sprang that civilisation which is such a distinctive mark of the Ireland of the first millenium of our era. There is no country in the world to-day which can boast the attainment in that period of a cultural standard attributable to the native<sup>4</sup> inhabitants comparable to that found in Ireland. There are very few other countries with a past of outstanding cultural value which can make the claim that its present inheritors are practically the direct descendants of those responsible for that past.

It is not here suggested that the results of archaeological research are the only proof offered of Ireland's claim to have

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<sup>1</sup> c.f. McNeill "Phases of Irish History," p. 114; Curtis "History of Ireland," p. 3 (for the reliability of the Tain).

<sup>2</sup> Certain passages of Professor O'Rahilly's monograph "The Goidils and their Predecessors" and in particular pp. 8 ff. will excellently illustrate this statement.

<sup>3</sup> e.s. H. Hubert "The Greatness and Decline of the Celts."

<sup>4</sup> Whatever the exact date of the arrival of the Celts in Ireland (v. Professor McNeill, "Early Phases of Irish History," Professor T. O'Rahilly, "The Goidils and their predecessors") it is certain they were here before the birth of Christ; and, whatever the numbers in which they came, the civilisation which grew up as a result of their coming may be reckoned 'native' to the country and its inhabitants in the same sense in which, for example, Greek civilization of the historic period may be reckoned native to Greece and the 'Greeks.' (For the problem of the Greeks of Professor J. L. Haye "Who were the Greeks?" ; Ridgeway, "The Early Age of Greece" where (Vol. II.) it is argued that the authors of Mycenaean civilisation were then of the same race as the inhabitants of Northern Ireland at the time of Cuchulain).

been a great nation.<sup>1</sup> Nevertheless, when it is realised that the claim of a high place for Ireland in pre-historic and early historic Europe made by the late Walter Bremer<sup>2</sup> is based almost wholly on the archaeological evidence, and that that claim has been frequently conceded on the basis of similar evidence, it will be clear that the study of archeology in this country has many claims to attention from others than the purely vocational student of the subject.

C. C. CREMIN

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<sup>1</sup> The following passage occurs at p. 7 of "Stolen Waters" by the late Mr. Tim Healy : "It was by right of Ireland that Henry V. at the Council of Constance secured precedence for his Ambassador over the representative of France—after learned argument which decided the Kingship of the Gael to be the most ancient in Europe—after Rome and Constantinople (W.D.O.C. I. 32)."

<sup>2</sup> "Ireland's Place in Historic and Early Historic Europe."



## *THE SLUM PROBLEM*

Is any substantial reform going to result from all the denunciations of the "slum evil," and all the assurances from Government and Municipalities that they are grappling with the problem in earnest? The press campaign of a few months ago, though doubtless the most vigorous, was not the first we have had since the establishment of the Free State, and we hear much of the thousands of new houses that have been erected in the past fifteen—or should I say five?—years. Yet, speaking as a house-agent of thirty years' experience, I have never known the demand for "working-class" houses more clamorous, and I am at my wits' end to know how to deal with the problem of old and decaying tenement property, which cannot be emptied and demolished because there is nowhere for the occupants to go.

The fact is, unfortunately, that the root causes of the trouble have never been fully exposed and honestly faced. Although little direct condemnation of them has found its way into print, I think there is no doubt that slum landlords, as a class, are generally regarded as the people to blame for the horrible conditions we hear about. Landlords have a bad name in Ireland, and it would be absurd to deny or attempt to extenuate the sins of which they have been, and sometimes still are, guilty. But times have changed, and it is no longer safe to assume that a landlord is a rich man, whose income from rents may be drastically reduced without inflicting any real hardship upon him. Nowadays, and especially in the case of slums, "he" is quite often some elderly widow or spinster, dependent for her bare livelihood upon screwing the last possible penny of rents out of her property, and unable (for reasons which I shall mention presently) to sell or mortgage it. The general public do not realise at all that the slum-landlord would have to be a very disinterested philanthropist before he could provide proper

housing accommodation under existing conditions. And I see no reason why such an attitude should be expected from him, or why he should be blamed more than any other business man for seeking the largest possible profit on his wares.

In the normal working of our economic system, dwelling-houses, like other commodities, are supposed to be produced and maintained "for profit," to supply a demand. And the first and principal reason why private enterprise has failed to provide decent dwellings is simply the absence of *effective* demand for them—in other words, the poverty of tenants. For hundreds of thousands of Irish people, it has always been impossible to afford the "economic rent" of a dwelling that even a lenient Sanitary Inspector could approve of. If, therefore, it were desired that the people of Ireland should all be properly housed by private enterprise, the first step would have to be the ensuring of an adequate income to every family. Such a thing has never been seriously suggested, much less considered by our legislature ; and all proposals for dealing with the slum problem have been, in the last analysis, proposals for building houses to be let at less than an economic rent, and taxing the wealthier classes to make up the difference. There is nothing wrong or unjust about this method, in itself, but the attempt to carry it out in a "capitalist" world, and without tackling the problems of privately-owned property at the same time, has made it sadly slow and comparatively ineffective.

In the city I know best, for example, what is happening is this. New houses are being erected in considerable numbers by the local authority, but most of them are on inconvenient suburban sites, and too highly rented for the average victim of slum conditions. In the centre of the town, on the other hand, a few old tenements have been demolished (and most of their sites left derelict), while scores of others are in the last stages of decay, and would be condemned to-morrow if their occupants could find cheap accommodation elsewhere. And the average owner of such slum property, even if he wished to improve it,

would find himself faced with almost insuperable difficulties. In the first place, there is the poverty of his "market," already alluded to. Secondly, there is our system of valuation and rating, which penalises him for every new building or substantial improvement—whereas the fair method would be to levy rates on site values alone, irrespective of occupation. Thirdly (and this is the point I most wish to emphasise), there is the outrageously slow, complicated, and expensive process by which alone house-property can be bought, sold, or mortgaged. In the "capitalist" economy within which we are all working, house-property must be regarded as merely one form of investment of capital, and it is not enough for an investor to know that he is getting adequate interest on his capital—he also wants to be able to turn it into cash at any time, on the shortest possible notice. But the unfortunate owner of houses knows that if he wants to sell, or mortgage, his property, he must allow for nearly ten per cent. of its value going in legal and other expenses, while the settling of "conditions of sale" and the clearing up of questions of title (to say nothing of preliminary haggling over price) will, as likely as not, cause a delay of months before he gets his money. Is it any wonder that lenders fight shy of such security, and that investors turn in preference to the Stock Exchange, where every transaction is completed within three weeks, and at a trifling cost, even though it means accepting a far lower rate of interest? The antiquated system which prevents quick and easy dealings in houses and land is not only an obstacle to the improvement of existing property, but a cause of much delay and unnecessary expense in public building schemes. The establishment of a proper system of Registration of Title, so as to make sales simple and cheap, is perfectly feasible, and would be an immense help towards the abolition of slums. And it should not be forgotten that terminable leaseholds are responsible for much of the reluctance of landlords to spend money on repairs.



The "Rent Restrictions" Acts are such a powerful discouragement to well-intentioned landlords (if my readers can believe in such beings) that they deserve a paragraph to themselves. However necessary in their origin, for the prevention of war-time "profiteering," these Acts are now almost entirely mischievous in their effects. They afford little real protection to tenants, for their enforcement is not the business of any public body or official, and, like most statutes which interfere with the natural workings of supply and demand, they are constantly ignored in practice. If a landlord keeps conscientiously within their limits, his rental will seldom permit him to improve, or even maintain, slum property. And if he ignores the law, and lets for the highest rent a desperate home-seeker will offer, although he may "get away with it" for years, there will always be a sword of Damocles hanging over his head. He knows that at any moment some wide-awake or discontented tenant may force him to disgorge a large sum in overcharges, and that if he should want to sell the property, very inconvenient questions will be asked. And hence his sole idea is to "make hay while the sun shines," and to take advantage of a housing shortage which makes tenants consent to pay grossly illegal rents rather than be without a home. Naturally, in a position of such uncertainty, he does not spend a penny on repairs if he can possibly avoid it.

There are laws on the Statute Book which, if enforced, would oblige every landlord to put his houses into reasonably adequate repair, both structural and sanitary. Why is it that they are not, and never have been, put into full operation? Mainly because the members of local councils, who are responsible for enforcing them, have a great deal of sympathy for the landlords—landlords who are often friends or relatives of their own, who may be little better off than their tenants, and who are faced with all the difficulties I have just enumerated. This laxity may not be wholly excusable, but it is very natural, and in the

circumstances probably inevitable. What can the best-intentioned local authority do, in most cases? Theoretically, they have power, in the last resort, to carry out necessary repairs themselves, and bill the defaulting owner for the cost; but how can they be expected to use the ratepayers' money for this purpose, where there is no chance of ever recovering it? They cannot, and the power is not availed of.

It is not the object of this article to suggest remedies, but to emphasise certain important facts which are almost wholly overlooked in public discussions of this problem. Present methods of dealing with it are inadequate, and largely because they fall between two stools. We have not permitted "private enterprise" to operate under the only conditions in which it could have been effective, and neither have we honestly faced the implications of its failure. Whether we decide to proceed by raising the incomes of the poor and leaving private enterprise to do the rest, or to concentrate on the policy of public provision of subsidised houses, it is equally important to release the property market from its legal shackles, so as to make transfers of ownership cheap and easy. And if we choose the second method, let us recognise the necessity for swift and drastic methods of expropriating private owners, and compensating them justly—but no more than justly. The one thing absolutely certain and unquestionable is that the slums cannot be abolished, or even seriously reduced, without a very substantial levy upon the incomes of "the rich," whether it be in the form of local rates or national taxes.

T. F. HARVEY JACOB

## REMORDS POSTHUME

Nuair a béas tusa i dtrom-suan, a sciam-érot scáileamail,  
Sinte pé carn árd cuimne a deinead de'n duib-marmair,  
An uair nac mbeid agat d'alcóib nó de manóir  
Ac clais an-óimhin agus cuas talman báisteamail ;

Nuair 'beid an cloc, a brugfaid ar t'úct scannruighe  
'S ar do bléantrača ar acluig neam-mairg doibnead iad,  
Ag coinnéal do éiríde-se ó'n bpríot-bualad 's ó'n mian,  
A's do dá cois ó'n áirí-imríim éactac do ríot,

Déarfaid an uair leat, ar leigheas m'aigne san éiríoc leí  
(Óir tuigfid an uair na filí riam a's coiríde),  
'Sna h-oirídeada fada san ó'n ar díbread an néall,

'Cao é an maic duit é, a méiríog neam-foiríde,  
Nár éol duit riam cao a bíonn na mairí 'a caoinead ?'  
—Agus creimneófaid an piast do éiríceann mar aitríge.

## CHANT D'AUTOMNE

Doibinn liom loinnear uairíne do dá súil leabaire,  
'Áille séim, ac indiu is foirt liom an saogal uile,  
'S ní'l faic, nó do grád, nó'n teinteán, nó do seomra,  
A b'fearr liom ná ruitnead na gréine 'sa b'airrge.

'S má's ead, gráduig sinn, a éiríde tais ! bí 'd mácar dúinn,  
Dúinn, cé díombuirídeac sinn a's fiú amáin uairíbeálta ;  
Pé'ca leamán nó tríofúir, surab doibneas díombuan  
Fógmair éigin glormair tú nó luige éigin gréine.

Qualgas geárr ! Tá'n uair ag fanamaint ; a's craos uirte !  
Á ! leig dam, mo leat-ceann agam ar do glúnaib,  
A's mé ag moctú uaim an tsamraí bái a's meirí  
Caoin-loinnear buíde an deiread-fógmair a blaisead !

Dá amráin le Charles Baudelaire : Aistrighe ó'n bfraincis le  
Nial Montgomery.



## THE UNPOPULAR FRONT

THE paradox in the title has its counterpart in life. It is easy to get a body of men to unite in defence of what they have and fear losing to a common enemy. However they may differ on political, national, philosophical or cultural questions they can be sloganed into fierce unity on that score. It is almost as easy to unite the men who have little or nothing with the promise of immediate gain. This is the elementary situation in the class conflict. These, in the looser sense of the word, are the popular fronts, the united fronts that crystalise naturally out of a materialist state of society. The title concerns a hypothetical body of men whose first consideration would be the well-being of the society in all its parts, the liberty, not licence, of the individual, the richness of that society, its homogeneity, integrity, that depend, to my mind, on the supplanting of a materialist code of values by a spiritual.

We in Ireland are attempting to build up a civilisation, to revive a culture, to emphasise our individuality as a race. It behoves us to look to how we are doing it. See what we have : a country wealthy in the truest and most fundamental sense, capable of supplying a surplus over her needs as a whole ; a people sufficiently alive in mind and imagination to create therein a rich life. But one sees also, that though rich as a whole, not all of her people have the necessities of life, that many of them live in wretched hovels, live dangerously but depressingly on the knife-edge of a dole. The country is beautiful beyond measure, but in the life of the people is no corresponding richness, only poverty and lack, or grey utilitarian solidity. In the countryside the new farmhouse is square, barrack-like and grey, a fortification against life rather than, as it should be, an embracing of it. The church, symbol of a people's faith and hope and charity, if anything, should be a sign of that in them which transcends the utilitarian,

a thing that would, in the integral Catholic society of the middle ages, have shown the unstinted and meticulous labour of innumerable hands. It would have been beautiful thereby, created by the people with hand and mind, not indirectly through an impersonal abstraction, money. It might have been the work of men skilled only in the building of barns, but they would have made up for their presumption in offering to God a thing that looked like a barn by making it the most superb barn that ever was. What church is built to-day, on a contractor's estimate, to a design that is the soulless simplification of what another, different age and people have done?

These conditions are not the signs by which you know a Catholic society, which, in health, is prolific of richness and whose social ideal is the equable distribution of wealth. The religion of this people is Catholic. It follows that some element has entered and remains a power in our society, which prevents that religion finding an expression in the lives of the people and the society which they create. Nor in this can the connection with England be blamed. It is not too far-fetched to say that a good proportion of the men who fought England for Irish autonomy, fought also for the organisation of society which makes these things possible. Our hatred of England was a political hatred, partly a nationalist hatred, but not a hatred sufficiently deep or apocalyptic to resist that type of civilisation that England, out of a different religion, philosophy and culture, developed within herself and seeks to carry to the ends of the earth. The character of that civilisation is determined largely by the necessities of capitalist industry; by the fact the commerce is the chief activity of the majority of the people in that state.

We still talk of Europe as Christian, in spite of the fact that reservations must be made that are all but destructive of the claim. We must return to a time when that claim was absolute, to isolate and examine those germs whose final growth and multiplication has come to dominate our society. These were the usurer and the merchant.

In the Christian polity of the Middle Ages, trading was looked upon with suspicion, and usury was condemned utterly, as at once an anti-social, anti-religious and completely unjustifiable activity. "Summe periculosa est venditionis et emptionis negotiatio," said Henry of Ghent.<sup>1</sup> According to St. Thomas: "Business, considered in itself, has a certain baseness (*turpitudine*) in as much as it does not itself involve any honourable or necessary end." As the State itself claimed Divine Sanction, there was no room within the society it fostered for any activity that was not directed to a moral end. The individual greed for land or possessions, for wealth in money or goods, was condemned as a vice. Absolute possession of property at all was a concession to the weakness of human nature. "The use of all things that are in this world should belong to all men. But one man has said: 'This is mine,' and another, 'that is mine,' and thus among men is made division (of property)," says Gratian.<sup>2</sup> To the Christian morality of St. Thomas, taking interest on money was sinful; his argument being that the usurer sold something that had no existence. So also the unlimited profiting on the sale of goods was sinful. "A thing must not be sold for more than it is worth to its possessor"—which, to my mind, means that it is sinful to profit beyond one's absolute needs at the expense of the community. The translator adds a note on this: "If a whole community were in special need of, or were to set up a special demand for a commodity, that would raise its market value—and so far as mere justice goes you may sell at market value."<sup>3</sup> Which, to me, seems completely destructive of the Christian ideal of human justice to mean that a man may profit, with moral sanction, by the most urgent needs of the community. The more urgent the need the surer the profit. But this note was added to St. Thomas at a time when men, even the men of religion, believed that

<sup>1</sup> Aurea Quodlibeta. Quoted, Tawney *Religion and The Rise of Capitalism*. p. 33.

<sup>2</sup> Gratianus, compiler of *Concordia Discordantium Canonum*. C.XII D.I., C ii.

<sup>3</sup> *Aquinas Ethics*, translated by Father Rickaby, S.J. p. 92 v. ii.



society was governed by an inexorable body of economic laws for which the individual had no moral responsibility.

The 19th century bourgeois finds his prototype more nearly in the Jew<sup>1</sup> of the Middle Ages than in the Christian merchant or master who subscribed to the Christian morality in his function and was restrained by the guild. Not that the Jew had any greater aptitude for commerce than the Christian, but that the regional jealousies of most feudal states refused to find a place for the Jew. The Jew was outside the law, forbidden office under the state or the municipality, refused admission to the craft guilds, denied the possession of land. His only resources, therefore, were trade and usury. Since he could not manufacture goods his only interest was in their buying and selling. The two primary realities, production and consumption, to him became secondary and contributory to the important one of profit. In the historical context of the Christian State this is a powerful subversive element. The Jew was relegated thus to that shameful pariahdom that flourished in direct ratio to the corruption of the state.

Peasant and craftsman create. Their labour has direct relation to life. The need and the fulfilling of the need are directly related. But labour is not merely the effort on the part of the worker to supply a need. It is an exercise of the man, and something of himself goes into the thing created. It is an expression of his being in relation to life. This virtue in the craftsman is at times exercised to such an extent that the object created has worth far in excess of its utilitarian value. Art has a beginning somewhere in this region. With this also is bound up the richness, beauty and integrity of a life that is near to the primary realities and can never be compensated for by mass production. But the bourgeois is not concerned with the making of things or the use of things. To him the chief value of labour is in the possibility of exploiting it for profit, in persuading it to produce the maximum number of articles in the minimum of

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<sup>1</sup> Cf. Sombart: *The Jew and Modern Capitalism*.

time. Bourgeois civilisation has no use for art, or craftsmanship that is diffused through the business of life. Such a pre-occupation would slow down the tempo.

The predominance of these elements in the life of a people destroys the texture of their life. Man's healthiest occupation is in making something, not merely after a pattern, which requires only mechanical skill, but after his own desire and conception. There is more value in crude handicraft, both to the man that makes it and the man that owns it, than in the easy perfection of the mass product. It is the value of the personal over the impersonal; the spiritual over the material.

Peasant and craftsman are the natural elements on which the healthy society is based. The growth of a merchant class is destructive of both, in so far as there is only the minimum circulation of money in such a society and, therefore, an unprofitable field for commerce. The bourgeois sells: he must have goods in quantity to sell: he must have a market. To him the goods are only the means to profit. The bourgeois or commercial civilisation demands mass production, and mass production has no room for the craftsman, who survives as a rare luxury in isolation. To the peasant it is easier and cheaper to buy the mass produced article, particularly when agriculture has gradually been forced out of its natural self-sufficiency, into an imitation of industry, into producing one type of commodity and exchanging it for others. The peasant in a society dominated by the bourgeois loses the best of the peasant qualities, richness in his life, attachment first to the primary realities, and develops, too, the bourgeois attitude to profit as the highest good.

A thoroughgoing revival of industry, which implies the provision of a market for manufactured goods, demands, as a corollary ideal, the collectivisation of agriculture. The extreme distributism, such as we still pursue, is economically possible only when a peasant society approaches nearest self-sufficiency.

Place these incompatibles side by side and you have a commercialised peasant pursuing a bourgeois vision of well-being, and flocking to the towns where alone it seems to him attainable.

In a Bourgeois society wealth becomes the criterion of worth and spiritual values suffer. Gradually less moral responsibility attaches to the means whereby that wealth is obtained. Arrived there the fundamental Catholic values are already inverted. What was once an activity at the very least morally dangerous now becomes a virtuous calling. Usury, impersonal, slightly disguised, is no longer shameful. Christian Charity gives way to humanism.

The power of the bourgeoisie was already far advanced at the advent of the Renaissance. In alliance with Monarchy the bourgeois had shaken the feudal system, a political victory for money, and the warrant of recognition for the worth and "respectability" of the merchant in the crystalising European nations. With the Renaissance came humanism, the advance of secular learning, the beginnings of scientific enquiry. Humanism, undefined as a movement, felt yet as exploration and adventure, was still a loosening of the shackles of the medieval code, of scholasticism, of religion that claimed the right to govern all human activity. Not that the Church stood rigidly against these new movements: the Renaissance might be said to have been launched by the labour of clerics and to have found its patrons in the College of Cardinals. So enthusiastic was this movement in its beginnings that Christ and Pan are coupled together in the same invocation. For a while the sophisticated churchmen threatened to drag the Pantheon into the ritual. So, too, with trade and usury, the Church as often as not denied that inner healthy core of moral responsibility that is in Aquinas. Only within these recent years has Catholicism tried to recover what was then so easily surrendered, and that, in countries where she realised through pressure of the forces round her, that the only future for religion is bound up



with such a recovery. But not in Ireland—where we rest in the certainty that our civilisation is the indubitable expression of the religion professed by our people ; whereas, in fact, it is something quite different.

Social justice is inherent in the commandment to love one's neighbour for the love of God. Humanism decided that it was more logical and more virtuous to love him for humanity's sake. Whereas the experience of some centuries of humanist experiment has proved that it is far easier to exploit him for one's own sake, to obliterate him with trinitritoluol, chlorine gas, and ingenious machines innumerable invented for the purpose, if he belongs by accident of birth to another group of individuals, whose economic interest is for the moment at variance with one's own. Which of these alternatives fits the temper of our people ? The objection is obvious, a nation survives in Europe only if she is prepared for destruction. In like manner the individual survives only if he is prepared to abide by the rules of capitalist economics. A Christian spirit is, therefore, not a quality that determines the survival value of nation or individual.

Humanism is the culture-medium of the bourgeoisie. Its primary effect was in the emancipation of human activities from the unifying principle that compelled them to subserve one end. Politics, economics, art are liberated. Henceforth, the state "appeals to no supernatural commission," but exists to protect individuals in their economic rights. These economic rights are defined by the new science of political economy which, in its ultimate form in Adam Smith, was based on a belief that the public good would follow directly from the unrestricted liberty of private enterprise, since "Nature has made provision for social well being by making each individual desire to better his condition," which doctrine is the human counterpart of Darwinian 'natural selection.' Nature has made provision that the fittest survive. The only question that can be asked : What are the qualities that determine survival ? Only a purely

secularist civilisation could have allowed such a philosophy of economics to dominate it for over a century, a philosophy that had its roots in a scientific attitude towards economic forces, deeming them impersonal and inexorable. It was not concerned with religion, with justice, not even with humanist "love," nor with any factor that transcended reality. In fact, and for all the sentimental pietism that accompanied it, it was a religion of materialism, the gospel that promised the earthly paradise to men. With it was the high tide of humanist optimism, sung by the Victorian poets, Browning and Tennyson, their hearts swollen with thanksgiving in advance for the promised millenium. "Let the great world swing forever down the ringing grooves of change."

The optimism has fled, but we still have it, battered, tinkered with, but still the same Juggernaut, bearing still the inexorable laws of supply and demand, the untouchable mystery of finance, the right of the individual to property and the accumulation of wealth at the expense of the community, the sanctity of vested interests. And we in Ireland are blindly creating a civilisation in economic structure and culture after this model that has brought chaos on Europe. Our propagandists of progress measure achievement by the rising value of stocks, by the volume of trade and production. Ireland is made safe for investment.

The primary bourgeois quality, and that which made possible its rapid growth, was a denial of responsibility for the common good. The philosophy of economics inspired by this quality taught that the public good would inevitably emerge from the unrestricted exercise of the bourgeois qualities. The science of political economy created the idea of a world force, a destiny operating through economics. Economic theories, from the madcap economics of *laissez faire* to the latest radicalism within the system, are various cults with various religions for the placation of this destiny. The individual, hypnotised, surrenders private conscience to the necessities of this machine. No stigma attaches to the investor such as attached in the Christian polity

to usurer, because the organisation of the company, trust, corporation comes between him and the individual or group of individuals whose labour he exploits. Is an individual any less responsible because he does not know those he has destroyed, where they live, or how their destruction is brought about? Anything else is impossible with the system, but then the system is the creation of individuals and the individual is ultimately responsible.

If we continue to pursue blindly our present ideal of progress, we will be faced ultimately with a choice between the two movements into which humanism has diverged: Fascism, the attempt to stabilise the bourgeois industrial state, that is, to retain the class organisation of capitalism: plutocrat, bourgeois and proletariat, or Communism, the attempt to distribute the fruits of industry equally over the whole society. Catholicism in Ireland favours Fascism, though it dislikes the name—and Fascism abroad has at least a temporary ally in Catholicism. Both are the outcome of humanism and industrial progress. The Materialist end of Communism is simply a concentration of that purpose which has dominated the Capitalist centuries. The materialist earthly paradise is the end of both; they differ as to who is to have the franchise of it.

We live in a capitalist state with the inevitable conflict of classes that is inherent in the organisation of such a state. Inevitably will this antagonism grow until one or other of these elements, bourgeois or proletariat, will dominate Irish society. Either alternative is contradictory to the inner spirit of Catholicism; the bourgeois being an unnatural element in the Catholic state and the proletariat the inevitable counterpart of the bourgeois; since, by admitting a body into society which produces nothing, neither in food nor in goods, and when no restraint is exercised to control the extent to which this element may permeate and dominate society, it follows that a proportion of individuals in that society will be propertyless, lack the necessities of life, in food, clothing and housing.



Both elements in the conflict, as it at present stands, are the outcome of a state of society essentially at enmity with the inner spirit of Catholicism. Any movement that attempts to identify religion with the capitalist basis of society is a menace at once to religion and the health of our civilisation. Through such organisations, inspired by the selfish motives of individuals, religion is like to allow herself to be used to prevent the righting of those wrongs that capitalist civilisation has brought about. The worker is the victim. It is only natural that he should organise and struggle for that justice which the system denies him. Must he find religion in his path and judging her by her works, conclude with Marx that she is the opiate of the people? That is what it amounts to. Admonitions to charity, dole, soup-kitchens, night-shelters, pious counsel of justice to the bosses, of resignation to the worker, are palliatives not remedies. It is asked of each to fulfil the duties of his station in life. What prescribes those duties, a hierarchy of values with an end in God, or the necessities of a mechanistic system based on a belief that profitable usury is the highest good?

There is social justice in that code which Catholicism evolved for the adjustment of men's economic relations with one another, when her spirit informed the whole civilisation. A return to that code is the way of honesty and the only way if spiritual values are to survive the destructive friendship of Fascism and the destructive enmity of Communism.

EDWARD SHEEHY

## *THE SPREAD OF INDUSTRY. I. Gains*

THE writer spends a good part of his time doing publicity and development work for Irish industry. Journalists are interviewed and given long optimistic statements on the new industries. Local committees in search of yet more industries ask and obtain technical advice and assistance. Contractors not using native materials are harried in the Press and by deputations and letters. The Government is begged, advised, warned, praised and condemned for its action in respect of industrial policy. Bills are examined and abbreviated. Ladies from such remote places as Sweden and Shanghai are told where to obtain this and that material for their fancy shops. Over twenty thousand enquiries are answered on industrial subjects of the most varied kind.

This work, which is of absorbing interest, stimulates to the highest degree the critical faculty. Occasionally come cynical moods as, for example, when highly protected industrialists imply that the courage required to found a new industry was of the same high order as that needed to defend the barricades in 1916. At the end of one of these busy days one asks: What will be the result of it all? What new problems have been created? These questions provide infinite room for speculation.

For five years tariffs, quotas and licences, artificial stimulation of credit, monopoly privileges and political pressure have been employed to create new industries, to exploit raw materials, to reduce to a minimum the import of finished manufactured products. The public in their turn have paid millions of pounds for this economic revolution in revenue duties.

The result has been the promotion of about three hundred new factories, the extension of existing concerns, the employment of an odd sixty thousand new hands and an increase in internal production of what will eventually total between fifteen and twenty-five millions annually.

In a democratic state the result is remarkable. In a state under fascist rule it would be, perhaps, discounted. Unorthodox hidden subsidies, excessive borrowing, secrecy in announcing statistics, the sweeping aside of vested interests would be the normal weapons of government. The factories would rise to a nightmarish cacophony of hysterical propaganda, marching battalions and flag-waving, while the relics of the "freemason West Britons" would be doing relief work in concentration camps.

But for a democratic state change has been rapid and moreover effected with a minimum of financial distress to the importing interests, the vast majority of whom have transferred their capital to production or have become agents for the new factories.

The speed of the movement has been pronounced, not only because of the political dispute but because of the infuriating stings of the Opposition in the Dail. During the first years they strenuously denied the existence of an industrial revival, the new industries were all in back yards or stables. Then as the walls and roofs slowly took shape in town after town and the imports of machinery rose by millions of pounds, the cry of high prices was raised and the suggestion was made that many of the industries were intrinsically uneconomic.

By the beginning of 1936, the Opposition commenced to change their policy and in their recent Manifesto full and ungrudging support of the industrial movement is pronounced.

Only one voice crying in the wilderness, the super Christian, Mr. Belton, remains, and his accusation that the new industrial complex is financed and operated by international Communist Jews is hardly serious.

If ever these gentlemen really believed in Free Trade, by their words and gestures they buried that care-worn and tattered spirit in a very deep grave. Their excessive vituperation hastened the pace, quickened the change from one system to the other. The result of this political hammering has been an almost



too rapid growth of industry, the achievement in a very personal sense of the Minister for Industry and Commerce and his able officials.

The new industries have been promoted and the construction is still proceeding. Nothing except a violent change in methods and costs of production, or a violent change in world economy, is likely to alter the situation. If ever the fiscal boundary between North and South were to be removed, there would be serious repercussions. Considerable compensation to investors in many industries would be required but that eventuality is too remote for consideration.

The first comment which may be made is that their psychological effect on the people cannot be over-estimated. Whether the cost of living permanently increases, whether there are serious problems to face in the future or not, the industrial revival has contributed largely to the lengthy task of curing the neurasthenia and persecution complex or paranoia which, operating in a subdued and subtle form, contribute largely to the causes of our difficulties in showing a united national consciousness. These maladies are rampant wherever oppression exists or has existed. In Ireland they rarely cause the same appalling problems of social unrest and disturbance to be found in the Central European and Balkan States.

Our politicians may disagree as to whether these maladies are due to a past or a continuing environment of oppression, but there can be no question that the symptoms existed, and still exist.

Outward evidence is never absent. The quick depreciation and snobbish contempt for Irish materials by the lower middle classes, the futile contempt for foreign culture by extreme nationalists, the murder of an old retired admiral for allegedly encouraging recruiting, the felling of trees by farmers in motor cars, are some examples. The gross and pitiful exaggeration of the economic woes of large farmers, the stubborn refusal to improve

methods by the uncomplaining and valiant working farmers who have genuinely suffered, the insufferably hypocritical claims by some people to an exclusively high percentage of Christian character, the strange and delusive fear of communism in a land wracked by excessive individualism, the dreadful and pious form of Tammany Hall tactics practised by some local administrations, are further illustrations.

This industrial revival is either a health building food or a potent tonic drug for the nation: whichever point of view be taken, it is destined to bring confidence of mind and to alter and modify the political strata which have been so hard and immovable until now. The new policy has broken for ever the traditional grouping of worker cum middle class publican cum working farmer cum sprinkling of writers, lawyers and teachers versus the rest, which have, with evident exceptions, represented nationalism versus imperialism.

It has created a new class of nationalist who, faced by economic change and encouraged by potential profits, has allied his interests, in fact, if not by personal admission with the nationalist group.

The workers have, without realising it, bridged the gulf between their traditions and those of the business ex-unionist class in the nation. The latter may continue to vote in a contrary manner, but their capital, their English educational advantages, their initiative are the equivalent of political support of the most far-reaching kind. It will be surprising if at the next election they do not also contribute their direct political support, not because of a fundamental change of mind, but because they think that continuing the present policy offers the best chance of remaining in the two worlds, old and new, and gaining the advantages of both.

It is interesting to watch the experience and profits gained from the closest association with England, the capital derived from English investments being devoted to strengthening the forces of a government removing gradually many of the links

which bind this country to England, and yet it is a natural process. The traditional nationalist has learnt the value of sane, united, ordered, constructive effort, and has learnt that the imperialist class has much to contribute to the country's welfare. The imperialist has learnt the vital truth that a nation enslaved mentally, whether by delusion or by facts, will never be a great nation till that enslavement disappears.

If there are costs, if the bill is going to be heavy it is worth while. Millions cannot be spent in any better way than in uprooting the eternal divisions of political thought in the Free State (let alone the North).

A second and more immediately beneficial result of the new industrial trend has been the effect on the towns of Ireland.

Not even the pen of a Liam O'Flaherty could do justice to the soul, destroying, drear, unprofitable staleness of our flowerless treeless, torpid, muddled towns. Their long streets, lined with unhygienic white cottages and grey cement shops, are one of our national horrors. They were unlovely tattered centres of distribution with a civic pride that was purely hypocritical. The mentality of the inhabitants was the mentality of the middleman, the goods came in and the cattle went out, and with the cattle as many young people as could find work in the larger cities of world civilisation. These towns now have industries. Their existence is of hard practical value to the whole country. The sawmills are busy, the transport men, the carpenters, painters, and other subsidiary trades revive. Money circulates that does not depend exclusively on the purchasing power of a foreign people. Some faint suggestion of personality begins to creep into the atmosphere of the towns. Here, again, the old political divisions begin to dissolve. When the most reactionary merchants become directors of a new industry, the old tradition crumbles. The political banners may remain, but they are becoming worn and faded.

When Major Fitz——, late of the Irish Guards, presides at



a meeting of the Company operating the factory in some small town and then proceeds to march in a blueshirt parade, the wiseacres may smile, for 'tis but a farce.

So these people of imperialist tradition, some gallantly, some grudgingly, conform with the tradition of '98: unwittingly they stride beside a ghostly procession marching to the Post Office. The political evolution of many countries is somewhat the same. We may be profoundly thankful that the process has not involved dictatorship and compulsion.

One more fundamental change has taken place in our national psychology. While Ireland has remained distraught and impoverished, we have been building Empires, creating industries, inventing processes and machinery, healing the sick and, last but not first, teaching Christianity throughout the world. There has been a curse on this island. Our people have signed declarations of independence in other lands, but never our own. Dunlop went to Coventry, Beattie fought at the Dogger Banks, Denis Lacey conquered the Crimea, the Ulster of Russia, Wellington won Waterloo, and Parsons gave England the turbine, and so on through the years. At last we have created opportunities for genius and initiative to operate in our own country. If we were, in fanciful mood, to add to our claims of over taxation the capital value of Irish genius exploited for the benefit of the Empire, the ultimate credit balance would be enormous.

It is very easy to make the free trade case against the industrial policy appear valid and almost incontestable. The claim that the value of employment in industry is negatived by the degree to which the national income is lowered by higher costs of production, is worthy of consideration.

Two factors, however, make a straight argument on this question impossible. Firstly, no one knows what the final cost of living will be. Many of the factories are not yet in production. Competition has not yet fully affected prices. The cost of living index in 1926 was 188 in Ireland, 175 in England,

the Irish index being 7.4 per cent. higher than the English. By 1931 the Irish figure was down to 166 and the English to 153, the difference being 8.5 per cent.

In February, 1936, the figures were 159 Irish and 147 English, the difference being 8 per cent. These figures show also that the cost of living is still below that of 1931. No conclusion, therefore, arises until the industries have been longer in operation.

The second factor is the international situation. The conditions of world trade, the rearmament now proceeding, are not factors which encourage a small island on the western edge of Europe to indulge in free trade. Every gun that is cast, every weapon wrought, make it all the more essential for us to provide our necessities of life. The industrial alcohol factories may yet be an enormous advantage to us in time of war. Our cement plants are but the most obvious necessities, as are also our huge new flour mills and grain silos.

Those industries, which transcend the normally accepted economic laws, may be deemed defences against external chaos on the one hand and against the dark forces in the national character, on the other. No one can deny that these anarchic forces exist without and within. No realist can deny that the particular psychology of the administration which operated from 1922 to 1932 failed to satisfy the conscience of the people, failed to convince them of their capacities, of their genius so evident in the world at large. The present system on trial has so far proved efficacious, but many a long year will elapse before the curative process is effected.

The claim is, therefore, to be made that irrespective of any doctrinaire view of political status certain economic changes were necessary to satisfy the minds of the people. One can make large more aggressively national claims, but that is not the point under discussion.

In the next article, the economic value of the new industries and the new problems they have created, will be discussed.

ERSKINE H. CHILDERS

## FLIGHT

"Do you feel able to wash yourself this morning?" said the night nurse briskly. The nervous lady lifted her violet-stained lids reluctantly; she had grown to love that shutting out of things and the soft wash of the bromidian sea in her weary head. "Can't I have a bath?" she temporised. That would mean at least another five minutes' peace. The day nurse would have said: "yes, if you don't lock the door, and promise to call," but the night nurse would ask sister. The nervous lady shut her eyes again and tried to recapture her indolent peace, but she could not, for the question of the bath troubled her. She knew quite well she could have a bath, for now having reduced her to this state all they wanted to do was to rouse her from her bromidian peace. They would, she felt, go to any lengths to achieve that. The great thing was to appear to co-operate with them. What really troubled the lady was the hierarchy of baths and washing. Never could she understand why it was an axiom that baths were more exhausting than "washing." It was so obviously the reverse; washing implied some kind of moral standard as to area and extent, combined with a weary economy of apportioning the meagre supply of hot water available, compared to which a bath was a poetical experience; one was "laved" and quitted the ministering waters like Sonica from the hands of her slaves. "Oh, shut up!" moaned the lady weakly to herself, for she very much wanted peace. To them a bath was a concession—"the Saturday night Backbone." She opened her eyes to change the subject but the lids fell again, "they would not," said the lady, with exhausted determination, "be conscious of their Backbones if they had baths the other six nights of the week. In fact, I'm *sure* of it," she added fretfully like a child, "but then I expect they would only have spines like me." And suddenly she felt very near to tears.

But there was to be no peace. Incredibly there was a pleasant looking man standing in the doorway asking something. Not a doctor, anyway. "Looking for his room," surmised the lady. Poor fellow! one must be kind. She rallied herself valiantly. "What do you want?" she said with tender sweetness. He cleared his throat hesitantly. "Can I clean the windows?" he inquired politely. That was a shock, but she recovered quickly.



She smiled wanly at her exquisite nails and then said slowly : " I expect so—but then I haven't really looked at them yet." She shut her eyes. There was a pause. She opened them again. The window cleaner was looking at her. The lady wondered dimly without much hope whether it was because of her last remark or the length of her eye lashes. " Thank you, m'am," he said at last. She jettisoned her frail intellectual hope and sighed. " Tell me," she said, " is it *very* hard to become a window cleaner ? " The window cleaner began to talk and talk, and the lady was enchanted with this further respite from action—if only he would go on talking like the plain chant from Debussy's " Cathédrale Engloutie " sounding through the twilight surge of her bromidian sea, but alas ! alas ! she had forgotten the crashing dominant sevenths—insistent, insistent . . . what was he saying ? " Special insurance . . . outside job . . . so high up as this." Peace was shattered. There was no doubt about it, outside her high up windows the window cleaner would fall and be killed—probably impaled as well. There he was, intrepid man, just because it had never happened before . . . but if she warned him of this awful premonition and convinced him of its truth this knowledge would only ensure the speediness of his death. The lady was awake now and shuddering, but an awful sense of fatality paralysed her brain. The window cleaner moved to the sill, opened the window, slipped out and shut it after him. Her heart swelled suddenly and burst in a confusion of panic light. Trembling she snatched her dressing gown and fumbled out of the room before the intensity of her gaze failed to hold those blue trousered legs fixed to the sill. Blindly she staggered down stairs to the bathroom and crashed heavily into a white-haired, apple-cheeked nurse, who looked at her shrewdly. " I—I—wanted—a—bath," said the lady, by way of explanation, and continued inadequately : " are you, are you on duty on my landing ? " " No," carolled the nurse blithely, " I, am one of the night beauties."

The bath was a good bath ; pleasant reflections sang in its gleaming sides, golden motes danced on the water that was hot, but not *too* hot by order. The lady's nerves relaxed. She noted this ; " soon," she murmured drowsily, " soon I shall luxuriate . . . soon, soon" . . . she reassured herself. " Why ? " said the Jack-in-the-Box harshly. " Why ? " (Placate his impertinence.) " Psychology—the pre-natal serum, you know," she said humbly. There was a nasty pause. " Oh, very well, then—Mother Sill's Soothing Syrup—if you *must* have it ! " she

retorted bitterly. It was all spoilt now. She shut her eyes deliberately and saw a cut glass vase on ebony precisely arranged with scarlet cherries each on a long glass stalk. Its incredible mathematical clarity frightened her, "there ought to be some green—just a little green," she pleaded. But it was inexorable. She opened her eyes; better look at something. She flicked the water into a thin diamond shower—glass again—what *shape* were drops? Pear drops while they gathered on a ledge and then round—approximately round like the world "*like the world*"—millions of bacteria fought and milled and fed in each minute crystal entity and died, too, like lobsters when it reached boiling point, but they were not dead now, the water was a horror of pullulating unseen life—and it was getting cold. Wearily she placed her hand on the side of the bath to pull herself up and half succeeded. "The trauma of birth," she apologised to the grinning Jack-in-the Box and got out with difficulty.

A nurse burst in with careful unconcern, bustled the water out of the bath, and in no time at all, frog-marched her wilted patient back to—what? But there was no sign of the window cleaner. Gone to the other side of the house, she was told. Slumped in a chair, she had an overwhelming desire to lie down. "Beeftea," said the nurse firmly. She looked from the watery broth with its mesh of gold grease circlets to the nurse's adamant face and back again. "Argus-eyed—both of them," she muttered gulping it down helplessly and was instantly reminded of the English lady at the Chinese banquet, who was compelled to do the same thing when she realised that her mouth contained not only mutton broth but the eye of the sheep's head from which it was made. "Why not? Same sheep," croaked the Jack-in-the-Box. The nurse moved suddenly. "You stayed too long in the bath," she said, and gave her a dose of bromide.

Time shuttled on, a turbulent tissue of apothecaries, doctors, nurses, messengers, wardsmaids. She was dressed to go out. "Are you ready?" said the nurse. The lady wanted to say "perfectly," belying it carefully with a final touch of lip-stick, but found she could not articulate the word without a hitch, and so contented herself with a nod, using her lip stick as an excuse for not speaking. It was strange how since the accident she could *think* words so clearly but how thickened and unmanageable they became unless she spoke slowly. She thought it might be the bromide and chose easy ones.

They stood on the landing. The nurse tapped her foot impatiently. The lift a floor below was going down. "I can't

ring now," she said, "until whoever is in it gets out or it will stop half way." She peered through the gates. The lady moved forward absently to watch too. Her eyes fastened on the descending roof and remained fixed. As it sank the black yawning gullet of the lift shaft grew with nightmare slowness and inevitability into a sheer and sickening abyss until, in her terror of that nauseating drop, the floor on which she stood seemed to be giving way crumbling into the vortex of its fearful attraction. A bell rang suddenly behind them. The nurse glanced at the indicator, frowned anxiously and said: "You'll be all right, won't you?" The bell rang again. She was off. Feverishly the lady stumbled to the stairs and shaking with fright made her way down as fast as she could. A door opened for a moment and a nurse with a bloody tray of tonsils appeared but went back again for something.

"If I can't lie down I *must sit* down," reasoned the lady, and tottered into the first restaurant she saw. A waiter with the strange inverted sensitivity of his calling came because he was not wanted. "The menu," said the lady in self-defence. "Soup?" oh, no! not again... "roast beef"... that wasn't a sheep, anyway, it was a cow... Oranges and lemons—mutton or cow... no, *not* cow beef. To describe a dead cow as beef seemed to be one of those Victorian transubstantiations that acknowledge a grossness without dispensing with it—frills round a ham-bone or frills round a piano leg—pantaloons and Valentines... all dead like the cow. There was something pleasing about the thought of a live cow standing eating the lush grass that she herself manured. The cow preyed only on the grass and the grass on the cow in a beatific cycle. The lady sought a phrase: "self-contained?" she hazarded, or was it perhaps rather "perpetual motion." The Jack-in-the-Box coughed discreetly and the waiter loomed menacingly. The lady hastily buried herself in the "Entrées." "Chickens' livers," she debated—there, if you liked, was the modern nudist touch—"on toast" added civilisation gravely—why not sheep's eyes "on toast," or tonsils "on toast"... after all, why not? Newly born live mice were a delicacy in China—not "on toast" but dipped in honey... "*milieu* is so important," whimpered the lady, darting round a terrified glance of distastes. The waiter became ominous. "Salad," she said firmly—"and cheese." The waiter, looking disgusted, was about to stand his ground, when a masculine voice as mellow and velvet as peaches on a Spanish wall, said "hallo!" It was the Count Banjax—6-ft. of incredibly superb manhood.



The waiter looked at him and withdrew. The lady, who knew him well, surveyed him with the innocent pleasure of a naturalist discovering a new specimen. It had never before occurred to her how astonishingly healthy he was. He literally did not know what it was to be ill. "Hallo!" he said again, modestly distrusting his first soft resonances, for he was young. A golden haze of well-being enwrapt the nervous lady. She forgot herself in a grateful glow of kindness to the owner of that soothing vibrant voice. "Have you lunched?" she asked. "Well," he answered conservatively, "I had a mixed grill and some apple tart, but I think I would like a meringue." And he really meant it. That was the kind of health he had. He could eat any quantity at any time without the slightest resultant inconvenience. His huge frame consumed and disposed of anything he put into it with iron efficiency. "Life," the lady reflected, studying his clear eyes, "is largely a problem of orifices." Women loved him . . . Free from money worries his undrained energy and vitality diverged into the most unexpected and sometimes fantastic channels and whether it was ghost hunting, experimental chemistry, breeding dormice, religion or ping-pong, he was equally rapt and absorbed in the enthusiasm of the moment. The result of his eager curiosity to know everything was that he stared so hard at sections of life that he could never see it in any kind of completeness, and so he never lost a scintilla of the frank obtuseness that so much constituted the charm of his boyish naiveté. The lady smiled at him and flicked through her mental social files till she came to the Banjax dossier and looked under "Interests." "Have you acquired any new match tricks," she fished, "or don't you see your friend Major Keeley any more?" "No," replied the Count economically to both questions, "he has gone away; but, as a matter of fact, he introduced me to a very interesting chap before he went—a great flying man who has got his own machine. I am going up to the hangar this afternoon to take it up on my own." Another intrepid man, thought the lady. The window cleaner, to be sure, used his "nerve" to earn a living, but in the case of Count Banjax it was simply sheer crass courage. All her life she had been terrified of heights. Even to look out of a high window produced in her a suicidal vertigo impelling her to throw herself out altogether. She remembered her horror of the lift. The mere thought of heights began to make her feel ill. Incredible to think there were still people who imperilled themselves high above the earth in frail baskets supported by frailer balloons. Mad, all of them, utterly mad!

The disapproving waiter tacked up, head on to the table, bearing an ignominious and nearly naked green salad, and with obdurate concentration carried out some complicated ritual of cutlery rearrangement, the necessity for which was obviously as distasteful to him as exorcism to a bishop. "And cheese," said the lady, being the only protest she could think of. The waiter modulated his eyebrows to mildly astonished reproof. "Certainly," he vouchsafed gliding away imperturbably. The Count, having renounced his meringue, became dimly infected with the waiter's disapproval. "Are you a vegetarian?" he asked. "Not exactly," murmured the lady, who really wasn't sure. "Because," he pursued, "I was reading the other day that vegetables can feel pain. But I expect the fellow must have been thinking of a cauliflower ear." The lady smiled wanly, but was saved from comment by the obtrusive return of the waiter, who dumped down a huge slab of gorgonzola with evident gusto, delivered himself of an ultimatum that it was all the cheese they had left, and withdrew with an air of unasailable finality. The effluvia of the cheese rose to the lady's nostrils like a deadly miasma, sour, sickening and overpowering. It ceased to be a cheese: it became a sweating abomination of corrupt lactation where foul mites teemed in its gangrenous scars. Waves of nausea swept over her. "What you want," said the Count anxiously, "is fresh air. Come up in the 'plane with me. It will do you good." The lady dragged her eyes from the bilious mass to the cool green of the lettuce. Her hand went to her throat. There was a slug in the salad. "Yes, yes," she gasped, "let us go at once," and made for the restaurant door.

"Now," shouted the Count Banjax through the roar of the engine, "we'll soon be on top of the world!" "*Aux anges, aux anges!*" translated the lady humorously. But they were both wrong. It was never very clear what happened and still less why they were not both killed, but they crashed almost as soon as they started.

The lady woke and stared hazily through the twilight at a nurse. "Can I have a bath?" she asked. The nurse laughed. "I'm afraid not," she said. "You have broken your arm and it will be a long while before you are even able to wash yourself." "How long," said the lady earnestly. "Six weeks at least," replied the nurse. "Six weeks," repeated the lady dreamily, "six whole weeks." She smiled, sighed contentedly, and fell asleep.

# LETTER OF THE MONTH

## THE RIGHT TO KILL

### Reflections after seeing "Vigil"

SEEING the play "Vigil" at the Abbey Theatre for the first time, brought home to me with sudden clearness one of the main causes (so it appeared to me) why cruelty and violence reign with so much success in countries where an enlightened code of ethics is generally known and professed.

The military system shown at work in the play displays this cause of evil in its most naked form, though it exists, a little less easy to recognise, in our social and legal systems too. Here, in the play, are three prisoners of war, technically "rebels," captured by the army of the established government, whose legislature has passed a law that all prisoners taken in arms are to be shot. This law, to the general mind, takes such murders entirely out of the realm of crime or violence, making them acts of loyal obedience to the State.

Such emergency legislation, passed at the order of a military government at war with its own fellow-citizens, relieves the consciences of military officers of all responsibility for the bloodshed they commit. Their consciences, of course, are already free of all sense of responsibility for the havoc they make in war, that has always been accepted as leaving them quite guiltless. The responsibility is with the legislature, who never see the men they murder, and who are a collection of many individuals, each of whom feels that he himself is not really responsible for what is done by the mass. Even the executive government, who framed the law, manage to avoid feeling full responsibility for it once it is ratified by the legislature. The men who do the killing are "obeying orders"—"carrying out their duty." They are made to believe themselves as morally guiltless as an axe or a rifle.

This parting of responsibility and execution is what gives such deadly power to the forces of evil, over tolerably decent people, in a democratic State. People will do literally anything if they can feel that they have no responsibility for it; people (not so many, but enough) will order literally anything to be done if they do not have to do it. And responsibility can be spread out until no one feels the weight of it upon himself.

See this at work in "Vigil," in the military setting of the Civil War. Not only the doers of murder are hypnotised by the "no-responsibility" spell, but the victims too. Here we have three men being murdered by a group of other men who are



perfectly friendly to them, whose one wish and endeavour is to save their lives. And when all efforts fail, and the undiscoverable veiled forces that decree the murder from afar off cannot be moved, the victims see nothing wrong or absurd in the fact that they are to be killed by unhappy men whose feelings towards them are entirely benevolent. Probably they regard the members of the Free State Government as criminals, but they unquestioningly accept the doctrine that soldiers should obey criminal orders. Drugged by the Soldiers' Duty, No Responsibility legend, they accept the situation according to the rules of the military machine, and probably complete the ritual by shaking hands with their murderers before dying. The unquestioning submission of the soldiers and the chaplain, the unquestioning acceptance of the prisoners, make a scene of horror too hideous to be expressed.

So the military machine, and those who use it for the enslavement of minds, go on and prosper. Official religion backs them up. Had any of the soldiers refused to carry out his share in the murder of these prisoners, he would himself probably have been murdered, very regretfully, by his comrades, at the command of men in power disguising themselves as the impersonal force of law. Thus fear is brought in to reinforce the hypnotism of Duty and No Responsibility, and what wonder if they cannot be resisted?

The parting of responsibility and execution makes it easy for crimes to be committed. There are men who can be savages without orders from above, but they are few compared with the number who will obey savage commands and feel themselves guiltless. How many women would wear the fur of wild animals if they had to do the trapping? They see the furs in the shop windows, and feel no responsibility for their presence there, and the men who do the trapping in distant countries would probably tell you that the responsibility for their cruelty is with the women who buy the furs. A jury finds a man guilty of murder, a judge sentences him to death, a hangman hangs him, and not one of them feels any responsibility for the deed. The jury feel that they must speak the truth, the judge that he has no power to refrain from administering the law as it stands, the hangman that if he does not do the job, someone else will. Among them they serve a law which none of them may approve, and thus they keep it in force. And neither the judge nor the jury ever see a hanging.

What would happen if humanity changed its mind and decided that everyone must be responsible for his own acts?

Nonsense, you say ; that would produce chaos. People must subordinate their judgment to that of their representative government, or no State could operate peacefully.

People may have to subordinate their judgment to that of the State, but must they subordinate their consciences? It is not quite the same thing. They may obey laws which they think are ill-contrived for securing their objects, but that is rather different from committing, in obedience to orders, acts which are in themselves obvious crimes. Murder, for instance. When authority commands the violation of all humane and kindly feeling, authority ought to be left to do the job itself. Let legislators and judges who believe in capital punishment be the hangmen, let military governments murder their rebel prisoners with their own hands, let Ministers who decide on war be deprived of all special protection, or better still, put in the most dangerous place that can be found.

There was once a young Irishman who laid down certain propositions on this subject.

"No man or set of men," he wrote, "let them call themselves or be called what they please, or be they ever so numerous, can make an act which is immoral in itself, proper, or can have any power to authorise its commission.

"Man is bound to refuse committing robbery, murder, or other sinful act, and to resist its being perpetrated, if resistance be in his power, whether he is ordered or incited by one or ten thousand, or whether those who order him call themselves or are called, Emperors, or Popes, or Kings, or Judges, or Senators, or Directors, or Parliaments, or Conventions. . . . ;

"This respect for and obedience to human laws," he went on, "has been one of the greatest causes of the calamities and wickedness which fill the annals of mankind. Reason was so corrupted that men conceived themselves justified in killing their fellow-creatures and taking their property, and otherwise torturing them, if there was what was called a law commanding it."

Thomas Russell was this writer's name. With sentiments like that, and courage to correspond, it is no wonder that he got hanged himself. He would be hanged or shot, if he were alive to-day, in almost any European country. He did not allow, perhaps, for the confusion that might follow if his gospel were put in practice, or perhaps he thought that that confusion would be a less evil than the obedience that goes with the subordination of individual consciences, when crime runs on oiled wheels because its instruments feel no responsibility, but are only "doing their duty."

ROSAMOND JACOB

# ART

## CUBE ROOTS

To flog a horse so unpleasantly dead as Cubism may seem pointless, particularly as the horse was never really alive, but, on the other hand (said he, spitting on his palms), that kind of beast never really dies. Each new quackery calling itself a New Art is accompanied by a very persuasive bally-hoo, and though the isms pursue each other into Limbo each one leaves behind an aura favourable to the incubation of a new virus. When Cubism burst on an astonished world a vast multitude of charlatans rose up to sing its praises and, since human relationships are founded on trust, it was only natural that a measure of respect should be accorded to the chorus of approval. It was, indeed, hard to believe that all these admirers were liars, that the monstrosity did not conceal some grain of sincerity and many honest searchers after truth still entertain a lingering suspicion, they know not why, that there must have been "something in it."

A letter published in this number of IRELAND TO-DAY, in defence of various modernist developments in Art, takes exception to a statement made here some months ago to the effect that the true genesis of Cubism was a rich joke. That statement was founded on disclosures made in "Testimony against Gertrude Stein," published as a supplement, last year, to the revived Franco-American surrealist organ, "Transition," or rather "transition," a source which could hardly be credited with a bias against Cubism. And here is the tale:

A French artist on a sketching trip in Italy was painting a picture of a village seen from a height. The result did not satisfy him as it seemed to him that it failed to capture the impression of a landscape crowded with roofs. This is a phenomenon well known to artists who often find that some feature which seems a dominant note in nature, will, when taken from its context and restricted within a canvas, lose much of its significance. As the picture was a failure the artist began to paint into it, at random, further roofs, placing them indiscriminately on top of trees, fields and even in the sky, idly experimenting to see whether the elusive quality could be captured by simply increasing the number of these shapes and so giving that feature in his picture a significance equal to what it had for him in nature. The ruined sketch he took home with him to Paris and then forgot. But fate was waiting round the corner. A colleague visited him to see the results of his Italian trip, came on the delirious ruin among a heap of other canvases, seized on it with cries of delight and not waiting to hear any explanation of its origin (if any were forthcoming), rushed away to evangelize Paris with the new aesthetic doctrine.

This revelation does seem to justify the use of the phrase "a rich joke." It was almost a practical joke. But it need not necessarily dismay the Pan-Cubists. A loophole still remains. They can fall back on the assertion that Cubism "would have come, somehow."

JOHN DOWLING



## MUSIC

### ACADEMIES AND PROFESSORS—II

It is my belief that this indifference to our national music has important results both mentally and technically upon the output of our Academies ; but in dealing with the charge that these organisations have "never turned out anybody" it will be better, I think, to set that matter aside for the moment and deal with other things having a bearing upon the case.

In an early issue of IRELAND TO-DAY, Professor Fleischmann stressed the need of economic security for musicians. Art always means specialization and as musicians must live such security is essential if amateurism is to be replaced by artistry. Music pupils have parents who, rightly or wrongly, are concerned with the material future of their offspring ; and the prospects of a few engagements from the Irish broadcasting service or perhaps a position in a theatre or café orchestra, such prospects are not so enthralling to the minds of responsible guardians as to fill them with enthusiasm for having their children educated as musical specialists. Economic security can be achieved with less ability and much less effort in commercial or bureaucratic life, and parents may not be blamed too harshly when in these materialistic days they look upon education as merely a passport to economic well-being. Our academies seem to have accepted this outlook for themselves, seem to believe that academic training is the end instead of being the necessary preparation for serious endeavour. They may not be saddled with the responsibility for the results of economic stress, but, as I have said, they cannot be excused their lack of initiative in idly standing by, content in their belief that their duty is fulfilled when they give so many lessons for such fees as Providence may put in their way. Surely they are interested in the musical future of this land and they must know that only when musical life will afford such economic status as may justly compare with that of other occupations, only then will parents seriously entertain the idea of having their children become professional musicians.

Having mentioned the word specialization, perhaps I should say here that the average mind, thinking of musicians, does not understand that word. To this mind a musician is a conductor, a choir master, an arranger and composer, a harmonist and professor, an instrumentalist and a teacher, and several other things miraculously rolled into a perfect unity, and the academy is the rolling machinery. For this reason the charge may not be read literally, it is much too sweeping. But I think that the complaint at the back of the mind is that our academies do not produce composers, that musical composition is virtually non-existent in Ireland. The question is "are our Academies responsible for this dearth ? " Do these organisations and their personnel make every effort to produce composers ? Is their educational programme dealing with music-composition responsible for this silence ; and, if so, how far is it responsible ?

The composer like the poet is born not made, and academies exist to impart the necessary technical training to the neophyte, to help him on his way—in that sense to produce him. That is to say, that I do not think the work of the academy ends with the mere imparting of knowledge; encouragement—that vague word—is essential to the young composer, particularly during those years of wearisome labour when he is attempting the practical application of his acquired knowledge, when a satisfactory solution of many of the problems occasioned by his stammering utterances, seems to him often impossible of achievement. One is justified, I think in doubting that such encouragement is forthcoming. I have a belief that the best practical way of assisting the early technical development of Irish students would be in setting them the task of arranging and setting our Irish folk music. Not alone would their perception of lyrical beauty be sharpened, but automatically they would become conscious of the many serious and difficult problems connected with such undertaking, with such interlinking of the past with the present. There is a great need in Ireland at the moment for work of this type, and though little material advancement can be offered for it, yet, I think the idea of serving national need would be a sufficient stimulus to students to persevere in the work—the idea of service if properly placed before students would meet with a proper response. Under such encouragement there would be a quantity of weedy stuff turned out, needless to say, but the best might be worth having for performance. At the moment nothing like this is attempted; after the years of existence of these academies it is regrettable to think that there is but one orchestral selection of Irish airs on the market, other output, too, being almost nil. Surely if the necessary encouragement were given such silence would be broken.

How far is the academic educational system, technically speaking, responsible for this silence? A complete answer can hardly be given in a short article, but some things to the point can be stated. I shall have to return, first, to an article I wrote some months ago upon "Atavism"—an article that seems to have been misunderstood by some. I tried to state in that article the fact, that, underlying all changes of technique and apparently new orientations of thought, something stable existed—a sense of values peculiarly Irish; that even if Deirdre be now but "a story that is told by the fire," yet we are still moved by her story, by the things that moved the generations that are gone; that we are still that which once we were, fundamentally. And so I said that "if a new music arise to express Ireland it can have as its root only the fundamental sense of values that belongs to the Irish mind." Speaking of the moulding of raw material into a complete fabric—raw material drawn from Irish folk sources, Professor Fleischmann has stated that "this is where a new school might first achieve definite results, producing an early crop of works in which the folk song, its body and spirit, would be the all-pervading sap."

How does the technical equipment taught by our academies serve the rise of such a school? I should say myself that it actively hinders such expansion.

Our academies seem to have accepted as an axiom the statement, made, admittedly, by many great harmonists that "the end towards which all harmonic expansion progresses is pure chromaticism." The results of chromaticism applied to Irish music have been stated by Foulds in his opus 92. I quote Foulds, as, being an enemy to the idea of Nationalism in music, his words may not be taken as *ex parte* evidence. He says: "The so-called 'Londonderry Air' has of recent years been harmonized and dis-arranged by innumerable musicians . . . . This is a plain diatonic tune . . . . with not a chromatic note in the whole of it. Yet a great proportion of these musicians have surrounded it with a viscous chromatic slime, which not only obstructs its free flow but renders it completely obnoxious to anyone who has the first faint beginnings of appreciation of propriety of modal style and intrinsic purity. (I have seen the lowest of the low lay their sticky hands on the sixth bar and sharpen the dominant to force it to conform with the unspeakable vulgarity of their 'harmonization')." This is the implication underlying what I said in the article already referred to, that in "modern" arrangements of Irish music the Irishman is conscious of a clash of values and rejects such arrangements as "wrong."

Harmony should fit design as closely as a well-made glove the fingers; should be so welded to design as to seem and be part of the complete fabric. Most of our national music is "modal," and I believe that the teaching of a harmonic scheme which has as its logical end pure chromaticism is the antithesis of what is desirable, is definitely leading students away from "appreciation of propriety of model style and intrinsic purity." This is not to say that the student should be refused a grinding in chromaticism; the latter should be part of his equipment—but only part; it should not be the goal of his endeavour.

If our folk song is to be the "all-pervading sap" of new works, I think it is time that our academic harmonic teaching was freed from the tyranny of the one major and two minor modes which are its bases. Lest anyone should think that I wish harmonic teaching to be narrowed down to seven or eight modes, I would like to point to Indian music, which after the centuries of its existence has now seventy-two modes. (I cannot deal further here with the question of "modes" but would refer those interested to Fould's work opus 92). A possible new school will doubtless commence with the modes used of old and then, of course, expansion will come—how, no man can say. But at the moment one would like to see harmonic education shaped to the end of servicing the rise of such a possible school: at present it leads the student out into the same wilderness where Stanford perished. The working out of such a system, informed with Irish values, would be a work of herculean proportions. Our hope here must rest upon the Professors.

And all these words that I have written are but the expression of the hope that, whatever may be past, our academies and professors should remember Ireland and her need, should shape their work as far as they can to serve her;

(see page 71)



## THEATRE

### WHILE THE CAT IS AWAY . . . .

The temporary visit in mid-February of the No. 1 Company to Cambridge, where seemingly a pleasant time was enjoyed by all, left the Abbey stage free for several newcomers, mostly of quite unmouselike ability.

Brinsley MacNamara's *Margaret Gillan* is a work of art in the best classical sense, every line tells, every slightest allusion goes to build up the atmosphere, the feeling of impending doom. Technically it is perfect and the foreshadowing, the marvellous economy of means, the strong scenes and the wonderful rounding of characters all held me fascinated. It is one of the masterpieces of the Irish realistic school, dealing with the usual theme of conflict of temperament with conventions and adds thereto Mr. MacNamara's recurrent problem of nemesis for folly or mistake and his utterly fatalistic belief in the inescapable influence of character and environment. The statement of this view is utterly cold-bloodedly logical (and this is the main fascination in MacNamara's work—it is sheer science in pure literature), yet it fails, I think, because it is too negative, too limited in its premises, only faults and mistakes count, being a marring of the unattainable perfect man which inevitably renders virtues and foresight (how old-fashioned !) of no avail. As a result Justice's spectacles sit rather crookedly on her aquiline nose.

In the old days virtue always triumphed. Mr. MacNamara, it seems to me, flies to the opposite extreme of making it always fail, through no fault of its own, of course, which only makes it seem more futile. There is too much of this to-day—this narrowing of purview to permit of neat uncomplicated experiment and minute scrutiny of detail, this shortsightedness which is the inevitable result of science without philosophy leading to the fallacy of treating the particular as the general. It is hardly realistic to leave the superrational non-commonsense element of human nature out of account, as is done here to satisfy the scientific urge to finish off everything in the laboratory, and so avoid the ultimate working out of a destiny outside the mortal coil in which the playwright involves his character—which Molnar attempts in *Liliom*, for instance. Your "realist" apparently experiences Hell only, so he ignores Heaven; the fact that one is as logical an outcome of humanity's own make-up as the other is also ignored, as also the necessity for both to complete a world-picture which will be some thing more than a mere reduplication *ad nauseam* of everyday life and injustice. Mr. MacNamara, however, is a *sincere* realist and fully aware of the consequences of his outlook. That it depresses himself even more than his public, seems apparent and I might add that this outlook is to be seen also in his comedies, his satire being a reaction from the self-pity of which his serious work is a direct expression.

Yet the author's honesty made this play a joy to watch and the working out was so logical, within the limits he set himself, that one could relax for once without clouding appreciation by extraneous regard for the current

social and intellectual bogies. Unspectacular but efficient production by Liam Mac Reamoinn helped in this as well as his previous experience with the play, having produced it twice for U.C.D. Dramatic Society. I liked especially the unobtrusive care with which the climaxes were developed and driven home. Moya Devlin's rendering of the name part was more than sufficient to create an intensely alive woman slowly warping herself into a murderess. The play is almost foolproof, so that the actress had the burden of enriching her characterisation rather than of creating it, and here her inexperience let her down to some extent, for I felt that with a more flexible voice and a greater command of body—both linked by a sense of light and shade and of timing which she still lacks—she would have brought out more than actually appeared. As it was the performance of this very heavy part was a physical triumph even allowing for her previous experience in the role. She was very well supported all round, especially by W. O'Gorman as old Master Grownney, whose macabre personality was only held from throwing the production out of balance by the author's own emphasis on Margaret. Incidentally, the similarity in characterisation and resultant mood between this character and the chorus of old men in Euripides' *Herakles* struck me at once. By sheer coincidence I had read the Greek play some hours earlier. Both are equally effective and if anything the Irish creation is more dramatic because more vital. So Mr. MacNamara seems to be Greek not merely in outlook! Josephine Fitzgerald, a talented pupil of the Abbey School of Acting, like Moya Devlin herself, delighted me with the personal rounding out she gave her small part as Ellen, she was simple human nature personified, and her poise and team-sense were pleasant indeed. Niamh Fitzgerald as Esther, Margaret's daughter, who marries her mother's former lover John Briody, was the type and acted with skill, especially in the rendering of baffled bewilderment which her part required, yet was rather ineffective because of lack of drive—she was pathetic rather than tragic, perhaps rightly so. The rest were rather out of key—Ria Mooney was *too* intelligent as Rose; Eugene Murray, though sometimes wooden, dealt faithfully with the part of John Briody, while Cyril Cusack seemed in the play but not of it. The setting I thought too "stylish" to suit the mood of the play, it did not echo Margaret's desire to escape by clashing subtly with her personality.

The only other show at the Abbey I wish to mention in detail is A. P. Fanning's *Vigil*, done as a curtain raiser for Shaw's *Arms and the Man*. This is a beautiful play, as subtle and indirect as *Margaret Gillan* was direct and blunt. Mr. Fanning has the Maeterlinckian gift for evocation and half-tone, and his sense of word-association and pause-value is almost perfect. It was well produced by Cyril Cusack, whose rendering of his own part failed, however, to bring out the full *naivete* of the Boy, the trapped lad waiting with his I.R.A. comrades, the Poet (Lce. Elyan) and the Peasant (W. O'Gorman), to be executed when the Free State officer, wounded in their ambush, dies. The author's style was completely objective, yet it was the most poignant re-creation of the

bitter futility and legalised injustice of the Civil War that I have seen. No player really calls for special mention for all were equally good, but the three named, as well as Frank Carney as the Priest, had the most difficult parts, and sustained them well.

This play is above all one which depends on its players to live, behind every broken phrase the spectator must feel the drive of the actor's intelligence and sympathy completing the idea and linking the sequence of half-thoughts into a coherent whole. This is a technique especially suited to creation of mood by working on the subconscious element in the spectator, a point I touched on in the November issue. This particular presentation was very successful in this, but could have been more so. We are already so much inside the characters' minds that undue clarity and realism was not called for in the setting. The keying up of feeling could have been hinted at by slight distortion of set and especially by subtle use of *coloured* light and vague masses of dull colour in the set itself—as also by a slightly slower tempo in acting.

*Arms and the Man*, producer Cyril Cusack, and O'Casey's *The Plough and the Stars*, producer Arthur Shields, were competently done and as usual the number 2 Company excelled the number 1 in feeling. Indeed, the outstanding quality of the Shaw play was its homeliness, its unaffected ease and the apparent pleasure the players themselves took in it. This homeliness resulted largely from Miss Moiseiwitsch's costume designs and sets (which were excellent samples of local idiom used as suggestive background), the locale, pre-1900 Serbia, giving her opportunities which she availed of with delightful results. As for the *Plough*, the audience demanded comedy and the players at times tried not to supply it (and thereby give the play a chance) and almost succeeded. This is hardly faithful production, but is the nearest the soulless efficiency of the no. 1 Company and its self-created audience will permit nowadays. The only point I think that calls for remark was P. J. Carolan's Fluther, another carrying on of tradition necessitated by Barry Fitzgerald's continued absence in the States. It was a fine performance, I thought, being as usual just sublimated Carolan, and yet giving us Fluther alive and whole, a fairly intelligent working-class animal anxious to please everybody and especially himself and having a streak of fineness in him that lifted him above the others round him. It was something to be grateful for.

As I had thought, the latest two productions at the Gate suited the Longford Company better than the first two, especially Rodney Ackland's *After October*. This play was essentially human in tone and very pleasant comedy as well. It is by no means a witty play nor even a drawingroom comedy, but simply a clear-sighted statement of English middle-brow mentality and character. As such it was handled with fair accuracy and much ease, I thought, by all concerned and once again a really balanced company precludes anything like special mention. In fact, only one person really disappointed me and that was Norman Scace, who seemed quite out of key, his part of the starving poet calling for something more than mere acting to type, even this not being related



to the other players. Either producer or player was at fault here. I think, however, I really ought to mention May Carey, whose acting of the mother was hampered by one thing only, her own dynamic personality—in fact, she got too much out of it. Producer again or player? And, of course, Jean Anderson's Marigold Ivens, a lovely piece of acting, worked up mainly on use of props, ranging from sweets to silver studded finery—her costumes nearly acted for her!

Lord Dunsany provided the material for the next show, *Lord Adrian* with *Cheezo* for a time filler. It was well this was included for otherwise the show would have been completely disappointing. The Dunsany gift for extravaganza seems best adapted to short doses when it can be as outlandish as possible, but a full length play only gives one all the more time to realise its absurdity. The author's skill, the producer's dexterity nor the actors' competence could not save *Lord Adrian* from being pretentious nonsense—it was not even good "spectacle." It was staged very well indeed (the subtitle idea, with blackouts between scenes, speeding up things immensely) and acted as well as the players could manage, though the usual faults of type-playing and stage tricks were well to the fore—most of the players indulging in melodramatic shouting rather than forceful speaking. *Cheezo* was quite different in content, excellent if rather class-conscious satire and well drawn, its types becoming caricatures by the time the players had done with it. Only Harry Fine as Sladder really did it justice, his part as a successful Philistine suiting him excellently.

The next Gate 'roductions are *As You Like It* and Arthur Duff's *Cadenza in Black*, while the Abbey is bringing out a new George Shiels' play after Holy Week. There has been no Comhar production of note, but *Aon Mhac Aoife Alban* by all accounts will be colossal! Readers of Mervyn Wall's articles, will be interested in the forthcoming production at the Peacock by the newly-formed Abbey Experimental Theatre, of his play *Alarm Amongst the Clerks*—a fine and attractive piece of work. This group, an outcome of the Abbey School of Acting, will do all its own designing, producing, etc., and will handle first productions as a rule. Another interesting enterprise which will also be seen at the Peacock is the Stage Society, an announcement by which appears on another page. Both are courageous efforts which I hope will have every success.

SEÁN Ó MEÁDHRA

# FILMS

## FILM AND THEATRE

BETWEEN the arts of the screen and the theatre a rivalry has existed which is understandable in the light of the former's history. This rivalry has on a close association of the two arts developed into an obscurity which clouds an essential conflict. Here fundamentals are lost sight of and the incidental is raised into a position of supreme magnitude.

If, however, an attempt is made to reduce the different forms to their simplest elements there is some hope of an understanding of how the two differ, and, consequently, some appreciation of the inherent potentialities of the two may be gained.

Of the general aspect of the two media we may say that both represent a movement through time and space of certain elements; but it must be remembered that within these elements themselves a more continuous form of the same movement occurs. The fact that the film has a smaller continuous unit than the theatre possibly depends on the greater power of selection and emphasis wielded by the former medium, thereby fixing an impression and an implication in the shortest possible time. The range and angle of selection are further contributory factors.

The theatre, on the other hand, has a larger self-contained, and, in itself, more complete multiactional unit. The impression of a theatrical performance is one of a continuous flow of event, whereas the cinematic impression is produced by the implicational impingement of the unit sequence.

To the now large body of film criticism, theoretics and technical manuals has just been added the specific comparative study of THEATRE AND FILM by Professor Allardyce Nicholl. (*Harrao and Co., Ltd. London. 7s. 6d.*). The cineaste is a curiously sensitive creature, especially when a man of the theatre takes it upon himself to pontificate on films. In the present case there is no need for alarm because even though Professor Nicholl dismisses the theorists from the start and proceeds to examine the cinema from the front as an impartial observer, he yet reaches much the same conclusions as the most devoted believers in the youngest art. His analogy of the commercial cinema with the Elizabethan professional stage is interesting, and serves as a basis for the justification of his examination of the more typical screen product.

In his analysis of the basis of film he makes a statement which is, to a certain extent, justly countered in another part of the book—"No really good film will present separate images or frames which are lacking independent worth." Unfortunately we have seen too many frames of independent worth acting as the disrupting feature in many films. But our author adds: "The visual images themselves should never assume such a pictorial beauty as to make them stand out separately from the rest of the film."

The chapter on the methods of the cinema reveals adequately the tremendous powers of expression available to the film director. If he has nothing to say he will not be able to cover his incompetence by blaming his medium of expression. Technique without purpose is far too common in our cinemas to-day.

There is, for instance, the fact that "over-use of the moving camera tends to bring the film back to theatre standards ; for the director, taking the easiest way may be inclined to sacrifice the essentially cinematic montage and attempt to secure his effects by means of camera manipulation." Again, "in spite of the fact that many excellent sequences have resulted from the careful employment of the mobile camera, insufficient attention seems to have been paid to the resultant audience reactions."

The approach to the difficult subject of sound insists on the realization "that the film has never been without sound accompaniment. From the earliest 'nickelodeon' days, music from a tinkling piano or a more formal orchestra has gone along with the display of the pictures on the screen." Admitting the advantages of sound it must be "reduced to the barest necessities." "Filmic dialogue may be introduced in a variety of ways of which by far the least interesting is that which shows persons speaking." And, again, filmic dialogue "must deviate considerably from dialogue characteristic of the stage. The selectivity is, perhaps, neither more nor less ; it is simply different in kind and fully to appreciate this difference is the business of anyone connected, either creatively or critically, with the cinema." With the thought of the Elizabethan theatre in mind, Dr. Nicholl is of the opinion that "we moderns are, it seems, much more deeply moved by visual symbols than by words."

Aware of such a sensible appreciation of what he is discussing we are prepared to agree with his conclusions "that the stage has in its possession a tremendous power through the bold acceptance and exploitation of the conventionalism imposed by its limitations," and that part of this conventionalism is the lack of individualization in the stage character, who is greater than the separate individual and represents an element of universal humanity. Whereas "if the theatre stands thus for mankind, the cinema, because of the willingness on the part of spectators to accept as the image of truth the moving forms cast on the screen, stands for the individual . . . . To the cinema is given a sphere, where the subjective and objective approaches are combined, where individualisation takes the place of type characterisation, where reality may faithfully be imitated and where the utterly fantastic equally is granted a home."

"Film and Theatre" is a sound treatment of a most confused subject, and the material surveyed is handled with a sanity which ensures a recommendation. The lengthy bibliography appended will be helpful to readers who wish to pursue, in more detail, the facts and problems raised in this most interesting book.

LIAM Ó LAOGHAIRE

### A MONTH'S FILMS

Fair entertainment characterized the films seen recently, and somewhat above this standard were "The Suicide Club" and "These Three."

SUICIDE CLUB: Walter Ruben.

A smooth and entertaining adaptation of Stevenson's stories, handled with



style by Robt. Montgomery and Rosalind Russell: under sympathetic direction. **ROAD TO GLORY**: Howard Hawks.

Overcame the prejudices aroused by its trailer. Cheap plot made acceptable by good work. June Lang, a new star, given a big hand by the camera, which made the sections of the film in which she appeared stand out from the medicore remaining passages. March, Ratoff and Baxter compensated for an incredible Barrymore.

**THESE THREE**: William Wyler.

A quite distinguished film dealing with the implications of evil emanating from the mind of a school-child. Clever acting from all concerned with a particularly masterly piece of work from Bonita Granville. The direction did not probe the source of evil but rather concerned itself with statement.

**EXCLUSIVE STORY**: Geo. B. Seitz.

A Franchot Tone vehicle with an impossible female cast. Follows the newspaper-racketeer formula. Twiddles feebly with pretentious symbolism and then suitably gets ashamed of itself. Stuart Erwin scores.

**THE BRIDE WALKS OUT**: Leigh Jason.

Fair entertainment. More star appeal than story. But a crazy New Year's Eve party compensated. The astute Sparks ditto.

**THE MAN IN THE MIRROR**: Maurice Elvey.

An Edward Everett Horton vehicle. Amusing entertainment on a psychological basis.

L. Ó L.

#### **MUSIC**—*continued from page 64*

that they should take their wares to the people and prove for themselves that appreciation of beauty is not the property of class, creed or circle. Material gain may not accrue from their efforts but at the end of all they will be able to stand aside and say: "We, too, have served."

EAMONN O GALLCHOBHAIR

#### **ROYAL DUBLIN SOCIETY'S RECITALS**

##### **THE LEON GOOSSEN'S QUINTET.**

For the Society's last recital of the season we had delectable wood-wind playing from the above combination of wood-wind and horn. Little new can be said about Goossen's artistry on the oboe and the highest praise one can give the quintet is to say that he was worthily supported. Hearing such playing one's mind was free to think of the music, to notice the effect of the French tone cultivated, upon the instrumental lay out. Pierné and Lefebvre were, naturally, best served; one was conscious occasionally in music by Kleyhardt and Hindemith that a somewhat different scheme of tone values to that presented had dictated the lay-out of their music; some things which must have looked well on paper not being satisfactorily realised. But even the greatest artists cannot be "all things to all men." A most enjoyable recital.

EAMONN O GALLCHOBHAIR

## CORRESPONDENCE

DEAR SIR,

A few points. In your editorial this month you refer to the "Southern Counties of Ireland." I may be unduly sensitive but the phrase "Southern Ireland" annoys me and I am disappointed to find you using it. It was invented by people who would like to think of Ireland as composed of two radically differing halves and takes no account of the geographical fact that this State contains within its borders the most northerly county of Ireland. If you remember its contexts: "unrest in Southern Ireland," "Southern Irish Loyalists," etc., I am sure you will never use the phrase again.

As to the general policy. Gratitude, for any sort of intelligent, independent journal in this land of hierarchical dictatorship, nearly swamps criticism but . . . in your January issue you promised a more aggressive policy of which so far there are few signs. You must face it—an aggressive policy means an anti-clerical policy. To the grief of anyone viewing matters from the standpoint of the universal church, it seems that there is no evil or abuse calling for exposure or attack that will not find its clerical apologists and active defenders: there are exceptions but I speak of the majority. How far it is possible to go; whether there is a minority independent of clerical dictation sufficient to support a journal such as yours you can best judge. But if you do go down for liberty's sake, die fighting.

It seems to me that an unscrupulous attempt is being made by politicians and an interested press to identify the Catholic Church in the mind of the people with Fascism. The Church in Ireland learns nothing and forgets everything, its failures in previous excursions into politics included, and it is not at all unlikely that it would accept such identification. The Fascist, we shall be told, at least believes in God and is the alternative to the Godless Communist: a new version of justification by faith, the good works being left to the Communist. Backed by clerical approval Fascism might have more success at its second than at its first attempt to take root here. It is the one menace overshadowing all others against which we must be on our guard.

At the moment the name of Christianity itself suffers from its association with Mr. Belton. A new commandment he gives unto us: no longer are we to love our enemies or pray for them that persecute us—we may not even feed their women and children. His anti-Semitism is characteristic: Jews were the founders of Communism and both are equally damned. I suppose he would be surprised if reminded that the Twelve Apostles and Christ Himself were Jews.

In regard to Irish politics I wonder are my changes of opinion at all characteristic. In the years of my youth I was enthusiastically republican, anti-imperialist and all the rest of it: also an enthusiast for Gaelic. A few years have brought shipwreck to both. There seems to be no hope whatever of Irish becoming the vernacular, in spite of, or on account of Government cultivation. As a cultural medium for modern Ireland it appears barren: one cannot pronounce finally for there is no material on which to pass judgment, the Gúm notwithstanding.

In politics similarly: Looking through a diary recently I came across the entry under 24/1/33 "Lá sabhála na hÉireann," and smiled sadly. Your remarks in February sum up things: Support for "Dev." still, but in a half hearted manner, as being preferable to his alternative. In regard to England, biggest change of all, my feelings are nearly friendly. For this the present state of Europe is largely responsible. The "angry apes" who bestraddle Europe

make one regard England as at least the best of a bad lot. How many in 1914 regarded Germany as we do now? If England, then as now, saw reason in her dealings with this country, what an ally she would have. Even imperially her crimes seem mild by comparison with the thoroughgoing "pacifications" of other nations. Yet—perhaps because I'm partly English—even an English accent violently annoys me. And we must never forget Wilfred Blunt's opinion that "The only argument England understands is a slap in the face."

Even in daily newspapers one turns with relief from blatant vulgarity in one national daily, and weak-kneed opportunism in another, to the *Irish Times* as being the only one with some sort of cultural background. Perhaps the fact that it is uninfluenced by the church of the majority has something to do with it. Certainly to a thinking Catholic it is humiliating that one must go to a non-Catholic press for impartial accounts of, for example, the Spanish war. Why, seeing the Spanish "reds" compared to Cromwell makes one think there may be something to be said for Cromwell after all.

But perhaps we are very foolish to get annoyed over trifles when always the day approaches when we are all likely to perish horribly. Not yet twenty-five, I have vivid memories of bombing in war-time London, and before much longer am likely to have experience in Dublin of what improvements two decades have worked in that line.

F. FUNNELL

### SURREALISM—THE EXPLANATION

In regard to Mr. Dowling's article on Surrealism in the February number of *IRELAND TO-DAY*, I think that some further explanation of their aims should be made. Though I agree with all he says about the necessity of traditionalism I deprecate his approach to this vexed question of Surrealism. It has failed, as he says, because it is uncommunicative, being, as so many of these intellectual movements are, only partial. But I think in all fairness to the movement a clearer explanation of its objectives are required . . . for there is reason, and very good reason, behind its apparent madness, as there was behind the apparent irrationalism of Cubism.

Take Cubism, for instance, which Mr. Dowling dismisses as "a rich joke." Cubism came about as a reaction to Impressionism. The Post-Impressionists said that the Impressionists, Monet, in particular, the leader of the school were inclined to paint too vaguely. Their pictures were mere expressions of light, colour, and atmosphere, all of which were ephemeral qualities. Form, the essential identity of a thing, was ignored; the thing which gave a picture dignity and the character of permanence. This defect was particularly noticed by Cezanne, the most thoughtful painter of his time. And setting himself to restore form in his pictures he discovered that "the cone, the cube, the cylinder, and pyramid, etc.," were the most vital forms, and killed all the vaguer and more indefinite ones. And he introduced them into his picture in a disguised manner as a house, or a tree, or a mountain; and as we can see often with the most powerful effect. In this, however, he was not so original as some people seem to think for, on analysis, Egyptian Art will be seen to be almost entirely composed of geometric forms.

So far so good when the clever men came along, and hoping as they always do to extract pure honey by the easiest method, started to compose pictures purely of geometric forms, and hence Cubism, though in this they were really attempting little more than the Egyptians had done, as any one will see who visits the Egyptian room in the British Museum.



And so behind Surrealism there is also an idea . . . an idea which is even perhaps more vital and subtle than that which was behind Cubism. Indeed, it is the idea on which the whole of Art is based, and which one might call without exaggeration the soul of art. For the Surrealists being in no way modest set themselves to answer the age old problem of what is Art. It is a problem which every artist must at one time ask himself, and it is a problem which every art critic is continually asking himself. Even a business man will wonder why it is that certain pictures which have been painted by a famous Academician and sold for thousands of pounds in a few years can be got for a ten pound note, if any body wants them . . . the Alma Tademas, and Rosa Bonheurs of their day . . . of yesterday. And yet to get a simple wash drawing of an obscure illustrator such as Constantin Guys they may have to pay as much . . . things turned out by the hundred while he worked as an illustrator for the *London Illustrated News*. Well may they argue that there is no sense, proportion, finance, or security in these mad people or their works. In other words, what is this supreme quality which makes a work of art.

Critics in their writing have given this quality a number of different labels. Berenson, the American, writing on the Florentine Masters called it "tactile values"—a term which to me seems without much meaning. A latter English critic called it "significant form," which if not fully satisfying is better. But in case any one should think that this search is a modern cult one only has to refer back to the well-known account of Leonardo da Vinci going about Florence constantly measuring the Greek statues sent to that town by the emissaries of the Medicis; and, again, to the complicated and semi-scientific researches of Albrecht Durer for this philosopher's stone of art. But though these artists possessed it themselves they could nowise account for it; while the Greeks who possessed it to an almost universal degree, probably were never aware that such existed. All of which points out that it is a subconscious gift in an artist.

And another curious thing about it is that it can exist without any diminution of degree in the flimsiest of works as the cave scratchings of the primitive American man—the only art, as someone has bitterly said, which America has produced. Indeed, the more detailed a work is, generally speaking, the more is this quality absent except in the Masters. Even in their case it is most evident in their rough sketches and drawings. To me one of Rembrandt's most trenchant things is his "Death of the Virgin," which, if my memory serves me correctly, is only a rather indefinite wash drawing, but conveys more than any other painting I know of, the effect of the presence of an unseen and all-powerful being.

It was by coupling these two main factors together, namely, the ephemeral nature of this quality, and its subconscious attributes, that the Surrealists tried to evolve a new and a vital method in art. Their urge was against the well-painted, realistic and detailed picture so much loved by the general public. They wanted to lift art into the spiritual or subconscious, above and beyond Reality, as the name Surrealist indicates, as Rembrandt did it in his "Death of the Virgin." That is why these pictures are composed of a few lines, each one of which is supposed to be vital. But they failed to produce art, not on account of their idea, but because they were not the men to do it, and because their efforts were divorced from life. But they have not failed utterly because, as in the case of Cubism, their influence may re-act to the benefit of painters and artists generally in reminding them of the essential qualities of great art, and prevent them from elaborating useless detail.

The public, of course, was only interested in the "stunt" side of the movement which was provided by the clever men going outside the medium of paint

even, and tacking strange things as papers, boots, banana skins, etc., on to their canvasses. I say "was," as I remember visiting the first Surrealist exhibition in the small gallery off the Rue de Seine at least eight years ago, for as a movement it is a thing of the past.

ARTHUR POWER

Bellevue House, Waterford,

### THE DUCHESS OF MALFI

For some of us who had hoped to see a Verse Theatre founded in Dublin, the neglect shown to Webster's "Duchess of Malfi" was a sad revelation. The fault of the dramatic critics, presumably. Mr. Sean O'Meadhra in the latest review came to my notice, dismisses the play rather less than casually.

The "Duchess of Malfi," far from having the "few good lines" graciously conceded to it by Mr. O'Meadhra, is all the purest poetry. The melancholy dirge of the Madmen:

"O, let us howl some heavy note,  
Some deadly dogged howl."

has not its match in English.

I, for one, shall certainly never forget the opening of the play: the happy intimacy of these gentle married lovers, quite unconscious of the dark cloud over their brightness. But the audience saw the cloud. The play has a strange, interior quality. Anyone who has been impelled down some magical wood in the West, on and on, as by an unseen presence—will recognise the same sort of influence in this play. We are pressed further than ever reason could take us—on into the spirit of people and things. How external Shakespeare appears in comparison. I kept thinking. Bombast! When the murderous brother kneels by his sister's corpse:

"My eyes dazzle. She died young."

Bombast, indeed! Hassan—to which Dublin crowded—is an ignoble play: wherever virtue raised a head, it was bludgeoned to silence, *instantly*. But, in this tragedy—for all the murders and evil passions—the noble patience of the lovely young duchess, as sister, mother, wife, shines, and will always shine, like a star—up above the bitter flood of pride, love and hatred that overwhelmed her young life.

To those who loved the play, the acting was superlative. Miss Jean Anderson was truly noble. How could the Cardinal have been better played?

With a very stubborn bow to the dramatic critics of Dublin, and to the many who withheld support from "The Duchess of Malfi," I protest (and I know I have a few poetry-lovers with me): *A divine play*.

BLANAID SALKELD

# BOOK SECTION

## THE IRISH SHELF

IRISH SAINTS IN ITALY. By Fra. Anselmo M. Tommasini, O.F.M. (*Sands*. 15s. 0d.).

This translation of *I Santi Irlandesi in Italia* (1932), to which Fr. Gregory Cleary contributes a preface (inaccurately described as the "introduction" on the title page), deserves to be read by everyone who aspires to learn more of the forces which have gone to the making of Ireland.

The author made an intensive and original investigation into the subject which forms the title to the work, and, writing primarily for Italians, he realised that it was essential to its proper appreciation that a concise account of the ecclesiastical history of Ireland should be included. Accordingly the first part of the work is entitled "The Irish Religious Movement." The story is carried on from the time of the Irish missions to Europe to the present day as the author believes that its vicissitudes in that period "testify with the eloquence of facts and more effectively than a hundred dissertations to the generous characteristics of a race which has remained faithful in a heroic degree to the religion first implanted in its heart by St. Patrick and his disciples. The fruits of their labours are to be found, if anywhere, in the inflexible resistance of the nation to a pitiless martyrdom of four centuries' duration, in the course of which Ireland set the world such an example of fidelity to Christ and Rome as is without parallel in history. The *peregrini* of her golden age in missionary zeal spread the Faith in Europe: her exiles in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries scattered the seeds of the faith broadcast in the lands of their enforced sojourn, and unconsciously fulfilled a similar mission in America and Australia." Fra. Anselmo's eloquent words may not stir with emotion the Irishman who has so often heard of these heroic deeds of his ancestors, but they are new to most of the people of Italy, who usually regard the great Irish missionaries as native to Britain, north or south.

It is more of interest to ourselves, however, that those eloquent words are the expression of the considered opinion of one who has made himself a master of our history, and brings to his study of it the critical acumen of a mind of a high order. His exposition is thus a valuable summary, based on the most reputable sources and authorities, and interpreted in the light of his own reading.

To the student of Irish history, the book is doubly welcome. The first part will be a useful and refreshing recapitulation of a subject with which he is familiar. It may be mentioned that the documentation gives an added value to the work as it is a ready means for ascertaining the sources of every aspect of the story. The second and third parts, essentially the subject of Fra. Anselmo's thesis, will be welcomed for themselves. To the general reader the book should be a special treat. The attractive style is gracefully reproduced by an erudite translator, and the first part in particular will be read with interest. The translation actually enlarges on the original as the author has added many further valuable notes. In conclusion it may be remarked that the book has already been warmly approved by Dr. Eoin MacNeill in a criticism published in a contemporary journal.

R. D. E.



## PENOLOGY

THE FOUNDATION OF AUSTRALIA. By Eris O'Brien. (*Sheed and Ward*. 12s. 6d.). pp. 432.

Fifty years ago, or less, the word "convict" was, by common consent, dropped from the Australian vocabulary. Its implications were then still too recent to be calmly surveyed. Australia has more sense now, realising, perhaps, among other things, that the fecundity of the "criminals" who remained in these Islands was at least equal to that of the exports, while their numbers were immeasurably greater, that a real criminal taint is now known to be dissipated in four generations and, above all, that the vast majority of the convicts who colonised the early settlements were guilty of "crimes" which would to-day be dismissed under the First Offenders' Acts, if not actually applauded.

Ireland's contribution was considerable, though not so large as might be expected during the period covered by the book—1786–1800—since the gallows was a much cheaper method of transportation. Our quota was made up largely of political "criminals" convicted of sedition. The story of Holt and the floggings of the United Irishmen in the colony are retold in these pages.

The first half of Dr. O'Brien's book deals with the social background in Great Britain and Ireland in the 18th and 19th centuries, and examines the economic structure and social conditions which created the vast criminal class then flourishing. The reader will have no hesitation in accepting the author's conclusion as to cause and effect. He quotes from the informer Fielding in 1750—"that all these wretches are not thieves, must give us either a very high idea of their honesty or a very mean one of their capacity and courage." Until the middle of the 19th century infants of six and even of four years were worked as "trappers" in the coal mines for twelve or fifteen hours a day. "A girdle is put round the naked waist to which a chain from the carriage is hooked and passed between the legs, and the boys crawl on their hands and knees drawing the carriage after them." Pity our dumb friends, the poor pit-ponies! The children who worked in factories (sold by their parents) fared better. By 1820 they could not be employed under nine years of age and their daily labour was limited to 13½ hours! This strange benevolence and discrimination in favour of the factory worker was probably due to the greater political power of the mine-owner, who belonged to an older and stronger stronger caste than the industrial capitalists of the day. The mine owners retained feudal rights, and up to 1779 "the Scottish miner was a serf, who was bought and sold with the mine and wore a collar round his neck." Rural conditions were equally bad, and the legalised robbery of the yeomen by the Enclosure acts created a situation in the English countryside which the sour temper of the possessing classes and the chaotic condition of the Poor Laws made uncontrollable. There were, however, landowners with a sense of responsibility, and from a group of these emanated the Speenhamland system of Relief, which lasted for about forty years at the beginning of the 19th century. Under this system a minimum wage was fixed for the labourer and it was provided that any deficiency should be made up out of the poor-rates. This has a strangely modern sound. And so has the result, which was to fix wages at a lower level and force the poor-rates to subsidise the employer's pay-roll.

Under such conditions the submerged classes were all potential criminals. The condition of the criminal laws made it difficult for any of them who retained a spark of human dignity or independence to avoid the actual stigma. The more manly transgressed, and of these probably the boldest were detected.

As pioneer stuff for a young colony they compared favourably, both morally and in stamina, with any available, and Australia to-day probably owes as much to these outcasts as to her Free Settlers.

The book is carefully documented and indexed, and is a monument to the author's industry and research.

JOHN MCCARTHY

THE ROOTS OF EVIL. By the Hon. Edward Cadogan, C.B. (*John Murray*. 9s.). pp. 314 + xiii.

An editorial note in last month's *IRELAND TO-DAY* suggested that the time was ripe for an investigation into "such issues as solitary confinement and capital punishment" and shrewd observers have noticed a tacit relaxation of certain parts of the Penal Code in this country since its partial severance from the Norman traditions of England and the "Reformation." It is, indeed, an unpleasant thought that a century hence men may look back on our times with the same feelings of wonder and disgust created in us by the social horrors of the nineteenth century. True, we progress, but in this enlightened age, when a lamb bleating from a poster (does your butcher use a humane killer?) is designed to be an assault on the emotions, it is rather a shock to be reminded of Men's inhumanity to Man and of our connivance at it.

"The Roots of Evil" is a careful treatise on crime, criminals and punishment under English Law in the 18th and 19th centuries, and the mind sickens at the recital of abominations then practised in the name of Justice. The brutalisation of the public conscience by participation in the revolting machinery of "Justice" was an additional horror, which continued, relatively, until yesterday. The last public hanging in London was that of Michael Barrett, the Fenian, in 1868, convicted of complicity in the Clerkenwell explosion. Public flogging persisted in Merry England until 1817, but the public flogging of women had ceased fifty years earlier, and even then there was an effeminate regulation, which ordained the subject's medical examination to see if she were pregnant. The last attempt to exhibit the rotting corpses of the victims of the gallows was at Leicester in 1832, but this was a revival, and was frustrated by public opinion, whether on sanitary or humanitarian grounds does not appear. "Out of sight, out of mind," and few pause to consider what is required of the "instruments of Justice" to-day, who carries out and supervises the hangings, the "birchings," the forcible feedings, the electric chair, the guillotine, which the "civilized" world still deems necessary, not to mention the illegal furtive cruelties which can be devised and practised with impunity by debased agents.

The chapter on the hulks and transportation of criminals describes an interesting case of cumulative cannibalism, which must surely be the original of Gilbert's "Wreck of the Nancy Brig," one of the survivors of which ate all the others. I recommend it to the attention of Professor MacAllister, who may be tempted to found a racial theory on it. One Irishman, judging by the name, was deeply concerned in it. His role was that of the first victim.

Running like a golden thread through this sordid tapestry can be traced the slow but sure return of the Spirit of Christianity. Men like John Howard and women like Elizabeth Fry did not merely shine by contrast; they were saints in their own right, and all through the period covered by the book, the degradation of society is relieved by the succession of reformers and humanitarians who rose in dark and evil days, and whose lives and labours are a measure of the real greatness of the English people.

The last chapters deal with the contemporary treatment of crime, its failures

and successes, and by inference plead for a recognition of the human waste occasioned by a system of correction which further debauches the criminal. It is a conclusion opportune enough at a time when serious minds in Ireland are considering whether it might not be wiser to lay sound foundations in social legislation rather than to patch and adapt an obsolete fabric.

JOHN MCCARTHY

### EURIPIDES TRANSLATION

FOUR DRAMAS OF EURIPIDES: Hecuba-Heracles-Andromache-Orestes. Translated by Hugh Owen Meredith. (*George Allen and Unwin*, 7s. 6d.). pp. 253.

Of all the great classical dramatists Euripides seems the most likely to reach the modern stage. Mr. Meredith has even entered into the lighting possibilities of each play, but however subtle the manipulation of light and shadow they will never reach the subtlety of the text.

He finds that "Greek Plays are to an astounding degree audience, actor and even producer proof." The reason must be that they were not written like modern plays to astound the audience by their originality but like liturgical services on set subjects. The sacred legends could not be profanely changed or twisted. The dramatists could only retell the old story upon new notes. Hence the interest of Euripides, whom Dr. Verall suspected of interpreting the stories of the gods with a continual irreverent *double-entendre*. Whether the Greek audience was as subtle as Euripides or Euripides as subtle as Dr. Verall has never been decided. There used to be a saying amongst undergraduates at Cambridge thirty years ago, "*si non vero, Verrall*."

In Aeschylus we know the meaning of the characters as clearly as in a Passion Play. With Euripides we have "to ask ourselves, Is he a hero, is he a nincompoop, is he a cad?"

There can be no doubt Euripides was interested in the abnormal and the insane. Many of his plays read like sketches on the edge of chaos. Mr. Meredith says "the madness of Sophoclean Ajax is sculptural, the sanity of Euripidean Theseus has a touch of jazz." Examine and explain this sentence, as the examination papers would say! Mr. Meredith has paid some attention to the difficulty of rendering the different tones which are covered by the same smooth flowing Attic. In Shakespeare's *Macbeth* on the other hand the language keeps the tone in different scenes obviously and wildly different.

For medium of translation Mr. Meredith sets aside that use of rhyme which would destroy Euripidean effects and especially that of stychomuthia, which he describes as "machine-gun patter." Stychomuthia, so dear to the Greek writers, appears to be a rapid but ideal conversation in which every antithesis is perfectly balanced and every epigram comes off: a combination of the art of Macaulay, Pope and Oscar Wilde! As Mr. Meredith rightly points out that "the stage effect must be heard to be believed!"

In rendering the lyrics of the chorus he prefers to use rhyme in spite of the two classical examples offered in English: Milton's *Samson Agonistes* and Arnold's *Merope*. Whereas the English blank verse and the Greek iambic do fairly correspond in action, there is a gulf between the Greek lyric and the English attempts to translate, and this is for a good reason. Mr. Meredith explains that the Greek Chorus was written not so much to be recited or sung as to be danced! One could dance to Heine and to some of Swinburne. Who could dance to Browning?

Finally, Mr. Meredith insists that, however tragic a writer, Euripides is full of humorous scenes. The Andromache and the Orestes are examples and



it is Euripides, not Aristophanes, who fathered the New Comedy and so much of the modern stage. But "the real Euripides must always be incompletely accessible to the modern mind." And there is the "astounding range" of his work. Andromache is tragi-comic and Orestes melodramatic: "What a gallery they are! How shrewdly do they present the mixture of energy and fatuity, wickedness and woe which civilisation instils in those who substitute dead rules of conduct for a living moral sense!" It becomes clear that Euripides is the only ancient parallel for Shakespeare, although it requires almost a second sight drama to interpret some of his tones and contrasts. Enlightenment dawns with patience, but Euripides has constructed a house with very many mansions.

Mr. Meredith's is the most stirring and provocative essay written on Euripides since Dr. Verrall. He leaves the student gasping that this cannot be so and then follows up his wild words with translations indubitably just of scenes that are wilder than one imagined. Still so elusive is Euripides that we always believe that to reach the modern stage his plays must be disbanded and brought together as modern characters with modern tones. For instance, what modern could produce the debunking of the "faithful friendship" between Pylades and Orestes with all the queer modern valuations of the romantic between men?

SHANE LESLIE

## OTHER PLACES

### A SENTIMENTAL JOURNEY

EYEWITNESS IN ABYSSINIA. By Herbert Matthews. 300 pages. (*Martin Secker*. 12s. 6d.).

This book is a pro-Italian account of the war in Abyssinia from the pen of an American journalist, who remained with the northern Italian forces until the fall of Addis Ababa.

The most exciting chapter Mr. Matthews has written, among much which is of little consequence, describes the operations of the Italian flanking column, which moved down the unknown Danakil desert fringing the great Eastern escarpment, under the command of General Mariotti, to protect the left of Badoglio's main body in the advance to Makhale. This Danakil force, which the author accompanied, waited in vain, in the desert, for strong reinforcements promised by the local tribesmen and then pushed on alone to find itself isolated and ambushed at Ende Gorge, within forty miles of its joining the main body at Agula.

This ambushade constituted the only close fighting experienced by the author, and is vividly described. In spite of his bias and admiration of Italian leadership, one is given the impression that Mariotti "walked into it." The advanced guard, injudiciously composed of untrained levies, carelessly drew in their flanks on entering a bottle-neck, and led the main body of the column into the most obvious place for a trap—a steep river gorge almost entirely under close rifle and machine-gun fire of well sited enemy positions. Luckily for the Italians, their attackers seemed to have known very little about either maintaining or pushing home their advantage, and the askari under their white officers put up such a stout resistance, that the Abyssinians evacuated their positions and decamped into the hills at nightfall, having made a lot of noise, and having inflicted only a comparatively small number of casualties. The map illustrating this interesting action is maddeningly irritating, as it shows no scale and no time key.

Like Evelyn Waugh on the other side, Mr. Matthews was restricted in his movements, and his reports were curtailed by a close censorship, but as the invasion developed he was allowed short visits to the front, where he viewed events mainly from the battle headquarters of the commanders, or from the immediate rear.

A closer study of white soldiers at war, and of the natives would have given support to his rather pretentious descriptions.

Although seven months or more in the country, he had not discovered that "Mskari" is one soldier, and "Askari" the plural only.

His admiration of the Italian black battalions wakes a warm echo, and their characteristic dogged cheerfulness and bravado are noted by him. He gives the Italian Regular Colonial officer full marks as a hard-bitten and hard-fighting type, but has little to say of the white soldiery, except those of *Corps d'élite* like the Alpini, who outwitted the Ethiopians at their own game of mountain warfare. The general impression given of the Abyssinian resistance is a repetition of collapse and retreat, an occasional counter attack, and no great show of leadership.

The book proves that the conquest of a semi-civilized Eastern people is still a very easy matter for better equipped and organised white troops, and that the most amazing part played by the Italians was their marvellous road construction, under conditions so adverse and disheartening, that one seeks in vain for a parallel.

There are some good sketches of the Italian Higher Command, of African scenery, and of the depressing heat, dust, flies, and squalor of native towns.

What can only be defined as a peculiar brand of sentimentality appears when the author writes too intimately of his private affairs, and he gives sex more than its due share, to such an extent that one is tempted to see poetic justice in the slip that attributes the wrong gender to the goddess Nemesis.

JOHN LUCY

### MR. BELLOC LOOKS AT ENGLAND

AN ESSAY ON THE NATURE OF CONTEMPORARY ENGLAND. By Hilaire Belloc. (Constable. 2s. 6d.). pp. ix + 80.

Mr. Belloc examines England as she is and attempts in the examination to exclude "all considerations of good and evil." Only in the Introduction and the Conclusion does he depart from his self-imposed impartiality. Such an attempt, implying the adoption of a scientific attitude to a subject that is amenable to no scientific vocabulary, can be successful only through such a prose as Mr. Belloc is master of: simple, direct, painstakingly clear; the idea stated, is defined, elaborated, modulated. There is no hurry. The absence of hurry is one of the significant things about his style; another is its insistence on the intellectual content, rather than on the emotive value, of words. His English is the perfect instrument of logic, making one doubt the need for one's regrets that Latin has ceased to be the language of learning in Europe. Thinking requires the static certainty and the capacity of a dead language for dispassionate utterance. Literature, on the contrary, lives by the dynamic element in the living language. That is why Mr. Belloc is so startling, in so having wrought a perfect instrument out of such intractable material.

But however dispassionate Mr. Belloc's logic, like his masters the schoolmen, in his premises he is anything but. The Introduction in particular, wherein he is passionate enough in his mistrust of humanism, gives the key to this study of

contemporary England. Here he has his tilt at Individualism and its rivals, Socialism and Universal Brotherhood. Through the rest of the book he keeps to scientific examination. England is Aristocratic, Protestant, Commercial (words of such vulgar currency that only a schoolman's conscience could give them meaning). The Aristocratic State, implies "a community in which it can be seen that an oligarchy directs public affairs, controls domestic and foreign policy, the Courts of Justice, education, and, in which such a social structure is found natural by all citizens." Protestantism makes for the self-reliance, self-confidence, self-esteem of the citizen, democratic qualities, but, "in a large and numerous society" Protestantism "makes for the power of the few." Add to this a reaction against the central authority of the Church of Rome. In the Commercial State "wealth tends to become the sole criterion of civic excellence," and the means of production come to be concentrated in the hands of the few. But a summary is useless with less space at hand here than would suffice to define the terms used.

It is a book worth study, but by no means a book without excitement. There may be no play with verbal paradox, but there is the paradox in fact, as when we discover that the English Banking System is the product of the same *Zeitgeist* as the football-pool and the lottery.

In his Conclusion also is a lapse from the scientific, into regret for the fact that Aristocracy has no longer any concern for letters; that letters become commercialised, fiction and sensational biography predominating. Aristocracy no longer provides a body of cultured educated opinion, is no longer the custodian of literature and creative art "by which a social structure is made living." From this must come, Mr. Belloc thinks, the decline, perhaps the extinction, of English letters, and a change in the influence of the Aristocratic element. It is here that our moderns of "new writing" and the Left Review would come into conflict with Mr. Belloc; wrongly on the question of scholarship and urbanity in letters, but with some justice from a consideration of literary and socio-literary values. Aristocratic patronage, direct and indirect, the letters of the salon, did, till within the last hundred years, exclude peasant and artisan, except as grotesque and gross after the psychological values of a Peter Brueghel. But this quarrel is of minor relevance, affecting only a corollary to the argument.

One other thing: Mr. Belloc groups us with the warlike peoples, the French and the Poles, in contrast with the peace loving Englishman. I wonder, all things being equal, as they never were, if this is true. Was not the Stage Irishman the hell of a fellow always spoiling for a fight? Or was the obscene monster really half-true? Perhaps we should know, if Mr. Belloc, with as deep a knowledge of us as he has of the English, were to consider the nature of contemporary Ireland.

EDWARD SHEEHY

## OTHER TIMES

PAUL KRUGER

THE PACE OF THE OX, the life of Paul Kruger. By Marjorie Juta. (*Constable*. 10s. 6d. xiii + 338, 2 maps, 9 plates).

The life-story of Paul Kruger is, in a very real sense, the history of the Transvaal up to 1904. This first complete biography in English is written from the frankly Afrikaner standpoint; and therein lies its value, for the volumes in defence of the British heroes of the Boer War make us long for a breath of partisanship from the other side. As a contemporary Dutchman



said: "As for the courage of the English soldiers, I would that the English Press had left me adjectives to describe it." Yet there is here a certain objectivity. We see Kruger, that "cross between Lincoln and Cromwell," in all his narrowness (he would not tolerate dancing at a Government reception), his arrogance, his ignorance (for him the sun *did* go round the earth), his savagery (*e.g.*, the ruthless early massacres of the blacks), and yet with a certain fineness, a simplicity, even a greatness, unapproached by the small men who brought ruin to his country, death to him.

Incidental events increase the interest of this book. It is instructive to learn, for instance, that the Orange Free State had its Ulster problem too, and that it was solved quite simply when Britain refused to support the "loyalists."

Our sympathy for "Oom Paul" and his ideals grows steadily as we read. From the early anecdotes of pioneering and of hunting, of battle and of athletic prowess, we see gradually developing the able and respected statesman: the Just Man who was naively horrified at Rhodes's early suggestion that he should get his much desired harbour by *annexing it*—from his ancient friends the Portuguese. Innocent enough to believe that honesty was the best policy where gold and imperial power were concerned, he was yet no fool. An early piece of British "diplomacy" he greeted thus: "Burghers, do you understand what the British Government offer you? They say to you: 'First put your head quietly in the noose so that I can hang you up; then you may kick your legs about as much as you please!' That is what they call self-government."

This God-fearing, Bible-reading Patriarch was to fight his last and greatest battle against an unscrupulous racketeer, Cecil Rhodes; Rhodes, lusting for gold and power, lionized in London, a Privy Councillor, hand in glove with Chamberlain, with an Irish henchman, Jameson, to carry out his dirtiest work, backed by the *Times* and the *Morning Post*, yet for years defeated and outwitted by this South African farmer of humble German emigrant stock. The Boer War chapter makes appalling reading: 40,000 men against the most powerful Empire in the world. The whole story seems tinged with irony for us to-day, as we think of the Abyssinian Massacre; parallels abound: London *en fête* after Mafeking, Rome rejoicing after the cleaning up of Addis Ababa; Roberts, Kitchener, and Badoglio, the ruthless destroyers of farm and homestead "to shorten the war"; the cynical inaction of the other powers, content to "condemn" Britain's butchery of a gallant people who kept her at bay for nearly three years. One hopes that thirty years from now Italians will read of the Duce's campaign with the sincere shame which every decent English reader will feel on reading this tragic story. Kruger's life inevitably takes the form of an unanswerable accusation.

The few technical defects, insufficient detail in one map, too much in the other (which has no scale), a lack of precision in the bibliography, do but little to mar an otherwise pleasingly produced and extremely readable volume.

O. S. SKEFFINGTON

### EDUCATIONAL

THE VIKINGS OF BRITAIN. By D. P. Capper. (*George Allen and Unwin*. 7s. 6d.)

At the period immediately preceding A.D. 800 we are on the verge of that strange epoch of European history in which nearly all the coasts and lands of our part of the world were visited by marauding warriors poured forth by the Scandinavian North. The Viking raids appear suddenly and dramatically in the historical records as an unsuspected calamity, something entirely novel and surprising. A well-known anecdote, significant of the sentiments of the

time, tells us of Charlemagne seeing, from a hill on the coast of Southern France, a fleet of foreign ships in the offing, and shedding tears in a presentiment of the calamities these ships betokened. And the first report of a Viking raid in the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle (A.D. 793) gives the same impression. Mr. Capper's title is somewhat misleading, inasmuch as he treats of the Viking onslaughts and settlements in Ireland and the Isles, the Norse discovery of America and pilgrimage to Jerusalem, weapons and fighting tactics, seamanship and mode of life, in addition to the attacks on Britain and subsequent settlement. This matter of a somewhat misleading title apart, the book can be unreservedly recommended as a most engaging and well-written account of the Vikings. I should like to see a copy of it in each school-library in the country. Not that it is primarily a class-book. But the author has a narrative style of so pleasant a calibre that the well-worn tag of clothing the dry bones of history may in all truth be applied to the book. "Romance lives in the very name of Viking," are the opening words of the first chapter, and as we close the book, having read of Ragnar Hairy-Breeches, Thorfinn Skull-Splitter, Ivar the Boneless and many others, we are forced to agree.

SÉAMUS PENDER

EUROPEAN HISTORY, PART I. (to A.D. 1000). By James Carty, M.A. (*Macmillan and Co.*).

There was a type of school history of Europe prevalent in my younger days in which Ireland first found mention as a country of rude and ignorant schismatic Catholics invaded for reforming purposes by Henry II. in 1171. History, or at least my school history, was then silent as to the destinies of the country until a later Henry commenced to take an interest in us, likewise for the purposes of reformation. Whether that type of text-book still exists in such of our schools as can spare time from the study of Irish to learn something of the history of the Continent, I am unable to say. Certain it is that Mr. Carty's survey of European History can give no cause of complaint in that respect. He visualises Ireland as an active partner in the European system, and traces her history contemporaneously with that of the French, German, English and other nations. His chapter on the Irish Mission shows clearly the immense part played by Irish monks in the life of seventh- and eighth-century Europe. The volume opens with a survey of the ancient world and then proceeds to trace the history of the Roman Empire. Chapters on the Migrations of Peoples and the spread of Christianity follow, and are succeeded by an account of the rise and decline of the Carolingian Empire and the subsequent beginnings of France and Germany. Within this framework of the main stream of development of the history of Europe we are given chapters on the Rise of Islam, the Eastern Empire and the Slavs, the Northmen, the Benedictines, and Britain and Ireland (A.D. 449-800). Thus every aspect of the first thousand years of European History has been covered, with, perhaps, one exception: why has there been no mention of at least the origins of Feudalism? After all, the Feudal System existed from the eighth to the fourteenth centuries, it has left its mark on European institutions to the present day, and ought, therefore, to have been discussed in a volume covering this particular period of European history.

Apart from this omission, Mr. Carty is to be congratulated on the masterly manner in which he has compressed this vast panorama of history into one small volume, remarkable for the easy flow of the narrative as well as for the interesting presentation of the facts.

SÉAMUS PENDER

## FICTION

ANGRY DUST. An Autobiography by Nikolai Gubsky. (*Heinemann*. 10s. 6d.).  
 MIDNIGHT ON THE DESERT. A chapter of Autobiography by J. B. Priestley.  
 (*Heinemann*. 8s. 6d.).

English is not usually employed as a successful medium of expression by a foreigner. There is, of course, Conrad as the brilliant exception with Michael Arlen breaking sales records in a tongue which he did not hear from his mother. French has a much greater number of foreign devotees and its literature has really outstanding novelists and poets who have acquired the language. Nikolai Gubsky, no doubt, if chance and the Russian Revolution had not destined him to remain in England, might just as easily have chosen French (since Russian was impossible in the circumstances) and probably with greater success. His narrative might have sounded less false, his attitude to his wife less self-conscious and priggish, his amours less obviously selfish, his Yogi yearnings less insincere as a makeshift for orthodox religion, if the Gallic tongue or his own Russian had been the vehicle for his own life story. Not that his English is bad. He writes with ease and individuality, but the whole tone is foreign to English temperament. What might have sounded in French as a little de Musset maudlinism has all the appearance here of a disgruntled bourgeois gone exhibitionist. *Angry Dust* has the ingredients of success and should make up for his financial failure as a novelist. It has colour and excitement. There are tense love scenes and an intense emotionalism. Vodka and Yoga can conceivably produce the same sort of umbilical inaction in the same individual. Inactivity, however, or the elevated automatism of the clerk's stool is foreign to Mr. Gubsky's restless flesh. If there are no profundities there is some humour. Of his fellow clerks in Newcastle he says: "Diseases were the purple patches of their existences; after being ill they would discuss it for a week."

Mr. Gubsky expresses surprise that Priestley in *Angel Pavement* was able to make the conversation of clerks both interesting and lifelike. Mr. Priestley can do more. He can to the exclusion of his own particularly personal reactions give us in *Midnight on the Desert* an estimate of America and the Americans which holds us and which by its very sincerity, without any Slavonic fireworks, makes us read him to the end of the chapter of his autobiography. This, despite the fact, that there is little auto and less biography. If any reader really wishes to understand the strange phenomenon that is West and Middle West and the glory that is Chicago and New York, he can find no better and bitterer guide than Mr. Priestley. There is nothing self-revelatory in this narrative but this in no wise detracts from its interest.

A. J. LEVENTHAL

## TWO BROOD AND JUAN PLAYS

VERY HEAVEN. By Richard Aldington. (*Heinemann*. 7s. 6d.).  
 THE QUARRYMAN. By Ankaet Howard. (*Secker and Warburg*. 7s. 6d.).  
 JUAN IN CHINA. By Eric Linklater. (*Cape*. 7s. 6d.).

In his new novel Mr. Aldington adopts the well-established method of engaging the reader's attention by the sympathetic and intensely subjective presentation of a particular character.

Chris. Heylin abandons his university career because of family insolvency, and comes home to find his autocratic and selfish mother bullying his sister, Juliette, into a loveless marriage with a rich Baronet. Mr. Aldington's values are essentially melodramatic. His personages, in consequence, tend to become



mere caricatures of accepted types. With the possible exception of Martha, all the characters are flat, lifeless, without genuine idiosyncrasy. Gerald is an exaggeration of the bluff Big-game Hunter; Chepston of the accepted University Don; and Ripplesmere of what is presumably, by English standards, an Eccentric.

The emotional "slant" on the story is obtained through Chris., a conscientious and highly unsuccessful introvert. The action, never very urgent, is generally superseded by the minute and melancholy introspection which it provokes:

"Chris. suffers. He is the kind that is certain to suffer."

This penetrating diagnosis is amply corroborated by pages of feckless brooding, mostly on abstract subjects. In view of the notorious phonetic vagaries of the language, Heylin is undoubtedly pronounced *Hamlet*.

As in *Death of a Hero*, Mr. Aldington seizes every opportunity for *ex cathedra* condemnation of what he conceives to be Victorian hypocrisy. This predilection is symptomatic—his outlook imposes upon his material an altogether invalid simplification. Every attitude is too rigid, every emphasis too strongly marked. There is no chiaroscuro of the emotions. This approach, combined with a strain of sterile iconoclasm, gives a peculiarly unsatisfying quality to Aldington's work as a novelist.

Lady Ankaret Howard's story of the Cumberland fells achieves a dulness rarely encountered, even among novels about rural England. The action centres around the friendship between Adam Walker, apprentice at Red Dale Head Quarries, and Jack Wilson, his foreman (who is subsequently tried for the murder of his young friend).

As is common in novels by noblewomen, the general effect is stern, earthy, masculine—in a word, *tough*. Cumberland is evidently no place for tender feet; moreover, the dour Wilson—though not in the same class as Mr. Aldington's hero—can do a creditable bit of brooding in his own uncultured way. It may be objected that Lady Howard knows her Cumberland—which proves nothing—except that Bundoran on a wet day is more enjoyable than has yet been suspected.

The writer of the blurb tells us that the Authoress is a barrister and that her knowledge of law is clearly displayed in the chapters describing the trial. It is advisable to take his word for it, as the display occupies some hundred odd pages.

The novel has, however, a certain amount of (detachable) distinction in the shape of an arrestingly conceived dust-jacket by Cecil French-Salkeld.

At the outset, Mr. Linklater, earns our grateful attention by the mere act of transporting us into a less gloomy atmosphere. Juan Motley, who paid such an entertaining visit to America, arrives in Shanghai just as war breaks out between China and Japan. He is accompanied by Kon-Kon, a Chinese girl, who is so interested in the fate of her country that she persuades Juan to support the Chinese cause.

The result of his intervention can easily be imagined by those acquainted with his previous adventures. There are fantastic plots and counter-plots, and double-crossing would seem to be the accepted method of doing business. Mr. Linklater's characters have a tumultuous animation which enlivens the most impossible situations. *Juan in China* abounds in characters and incidents—Flanders, the fat Englishman who sells ply-wood tanks (made in Japan) to the Chinese; Hikohoki, a Jap of all trades; "The Sisters Karamazar" (Russian Siamese Twins), and the search for Lo Yu's "Plan" for the evolution of braver and better China.

Mr. Linklater, as usual, writes with verve and humour, and with that fine gust for the language which only writers born outside of England seem to possess.

NIALL SHERIDAN

## WITH THE CHILDREN

JOHNNY AND JEMIMA. By Bryan Guinness. (*Heinemann*. 2s. 6d.).

BULLDOG SHEILA. By J. F. W. Hickey. (*Heinemann*. 5s. 0d.).

THE KIND COMPANION. By Dorothy M. Large. (*Talbot Press*. 3s. 6d.).

BACK TO TREASURE ISLAND. By H. A. Calahan. (*A. and C. Black*. 5s. 0d.).

THE AIR DOPE-HUNTERS. By Jack Heming. (*A. and C. Black*. 3s. 6d.).

The above sheaf was thrust into my hands mainly because I had a child "about ten," but I quickly found that despite murder and stolen air-liners, Mr. Heming's book was not for "us." In *Back to Treasure Island*, with its splendid illustrations, we were on surer ground and this review must mainly be on the note of regret that our own country should leave so much to be desired in the way of children's books. Numbers of course count, but it is suggested that Miss Large's book might have been brightened up exteriorly by a less drab dust wrapper. The child is avid for colour and even an unillustrated book is endured if a bright cover is there to be browsed over again and again. The book itself had a rather melancholy simplicity, yet after each of the earlier chapters I read aloud to my hopeful, ejaculations of pleasurable satisfaction greeted me, sometimes to my surprise. The illustrations are excellent, though not possessed by the dynamic and careful style of the many that mark the truly lurid adventures of Bulldog Sheila, and the Gang—a recommendation of the Junior Book Club, by the way.

And now, since the reader will have guessed that the above list is roughly in order of merit, I may summarise my feeling about this delightful book by the Hon. Bryan Guinness, by saying that far from being irksome to read aloud every line of it to my son, it was questionable which derived from it the more entertainment. The illustrations are by Roland Pym—an artistic treat—and the whole book is a delight and far and away the best value of the lot. A gift I could genuinely recommend and a book of which I should be proud to see an Irish-published equivalent.

KEVIN HANLEY

## FILM AND THEATRE

### ROMANCE AND REALISM

THE ROMANCE OF THE MOVIES. By Leslie Wood. (*Heinemann*, 15s.). pp. 343 + viii

*The Romance of the Movies* is easy to read, and hidden away among its pages is real information, but why Mr. Wood, who obviously knows his stuff, should meander about like a Sunday newspaper film critic, is one of the mysteries and minor tragedies of what could have been a really useful book.

The section dealing with pre-war production, with scenery erected on open air stages, is interesting, and it is refreshing to find someone giving overdue credit to De Forest Phonofilms and British Talking Pictures, for their pioneer work in sound film production.

I recently had an opportunity of hearing some early British Talking Films shorts over a modern wide range reproducer, and I can verify that not only do they deserve credit for their research work, but that the actual recorded quality of those early talkies was far in advance of any of Hollywood's later efforts.

Most books on the cinema fill their pages with "Ufa," "Sovkino," "René Clair," "Eisenstein," and "Pabst." It is interesting, and by no means against it, that Mr. Woods ignores the whole lot of them, and for him, as for the average cinema goer, "movies" mean Hollywood and England. The whole history of Hollywood, however, does show that very little that is new has ever been born under Californian skies, and the influence of European production, both in personnel, and on technique, ought surely to have merited a page.

An interesting book, but a disappointment. We still wait for the book that will show us the romance that is *in* the movies, rather than that in which the movies have become submerged.

W. M.

**MONEY BEHIND THE SCREEN.** A Report prepared on behalf of the Film Council by F. D. Klingender and Stuart Legg. Preface by John Grierson. (*Lawrence and Wishart*, 5s.). pp. 80.

Here's Romance for you, and enough Fantasy to make a film shareholder tremble.

The "Star" appears only as a director of his own production company, but it seems not the least precarious role that he has been called upon to play.

*Money Behind the Screen* does not attempt to explain—in many cases explanation must be next to impossible, but it sets out to show something of the financial background behind Britain's dash into the world's film-producing market. Written in a style that would do credit to a White Paper, this book sets before you the plain facts of the "Money behind the Screen."

I can do no better than quote Mr. John Grierson's introductory remarks: "We wanted to look behind the gossip, rumours, hunches and half-truths of Wardour Street and create for ourselves a more satisfactory body of information. We were conscious—and who in the film industry is not?—that many of the facts which we daily encountered in our work were considered by the journalists too hot to touch and that aspects of the film industry of great social importance remained unstudied."

To all interested in the cinema I prescribe this book. I do not understand it all. I doubt whether the situation revealed is possible of understanding, but whatever half comprehended information you are able to glean from this book is well worth the concentrated study it requires. To both the "fan" and the banker it is a revelation. I personally cannot understand how a £100 company, can, on the strength of an *un-made* picture, manage to run up debts of maybe £50,000, or how the Aldgate Trustees, Ltd., consider it good business to be owed £2,823,300 by half the British film industry—the bank managers of my acquaintance have never been suggestive of such latent consideration. Perhaps it is not a coincidence that immediately after the publication of this book, three of the producers mentioned were compelled to shut up shop, while the menace of far larger upheavals is daily troubling both Throgmorton and Wardour Streets.

To both the Film Council, and those whose help made this Report possible, all who are interested in a serious future for the Film owe their deepest thanks.

In conclusion, Grierson again:



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The Romance of the Movies . . . God help us.

W. M.

### THEATRE

VIGIL and BRANDON. A. P. Fanning. ("Midland Tribune," Birr, 2s. 6d.).  
BEST ONE-ACT PLAYS OF 1936. Ed. J. W. Marriott. (Harrap. 7s. 6d.).  
THEATRE: a Novel. W. Somerset Maugham. (Heinemann. 7s. 6d.).

*Vigil* I have dealt with sufficiently in the current Theatre section. *Brandon*, a one-act miracle play, reflects the same skill, the same sense of style and is the exception that proves the dramatic rule that saints and monks should resemble filleted codfish. It offers full scope for skill in staging and acting and should be popular with enterprising amateurs. But surely for 2s. 6d' one might expect something less like a cross between a railway timetable and a C.T.S. 2d. pamphlet. These would be better printed, at least.

Mr. Marriott's Annual budget is by now an accepted part of the amateur theatrical year—and professionals, as he notes with justifiable satisfaction, are waking up to the value of this playform too. Compared with former years, there is a certain sameness in these twelve playlets—either Mr. Marriott or his authors have "got sociology" (a disease whose chief symptom is acute depression of a highly infectious nature)—but there is the usual high finish in characters, dialogue and stage effect. Most require very simple staging, though elaboration could be indulged in if thought advisable. The volume is well worth getting if only for the sake of the following at least:—Noel Coward's *Fumed Oak*, the revolt of a husband against family selfishness—with a fine part for Mr. Coward, naturally!; ex-coalminer Joe Corrie's *Children of Darkness*, a heartrending play of the depressed areas in England, with something indomitable in it in face of sheer despair; Olive Conway's *Dux*, a satire on Fascism so gross that it almost fails as propaganda, and R. E. Mitchell's Welsh comedy, *A Husband for Breakfast*, a delightful opportunity for teamwork and lively playing. Perhaps the best of all, however, is Fritz Karinthy's *Refund*, a satirical extravaganza of a former pupil demanding his school fees back because his school did not give him value for money in the shape of education. It must be read to be believed.

W. Somerset Maugham's novel, *Theatre*, is just a highly competent pot-boiler, written to keep a self-created public satisfied. That the heroine is an actress is just an accident. Nevertheless, the delineation of her outlook as actress and of her attitude to her art is well done and as interesting as the author of some eighteen plays can make it. In fact, this aspect, a minor one, is the only thing of real value in the novel. There is one page on technique, a study surely from life, it runs so smoothly and unerringly, of the heroine's methods in "killing" a rival in acting and in love. This is so good that it almost tempts me to recommend the novel . . . almost.

SEÁN Ó MEADHRA

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## THE MONTH IN RETROSPECT. (16 FEB.—15 MAR.)

CHANGE from individual to state ownership was undemocratic, said Minister for Industry and Commerce, and referred to trade unionism disorganisation. Deputy William Norton visited Papal Nuncio to protest against *Irish Catholic* article quoted in *L'Osservatore Romano* charging Irish trade unionists with tacit support of communism. There was no communism in trade union movement, stated Dublin Port Workers Secretary, and destruction of trade unionism was critics' real objective. Rev. J. M. Lynch at Belfast C.T.S. said Catholic papers should devote more attention to the social evils which fostered communism. Attacks on teachers in Achill in dispute with parents over operation of School Meals' scheme; Teachers' Organisation Secretary said gang law ruled and Government were guilty of grave dereliction of duty. All parties in Dail welcomed new Widows' and Orphans' Pensions Bill, which will benefit 41,000 widows and 29,000 orphans in first year. More families move from Cork and Kerry to Meath in Government Nua-Gaeltacht scheme. Land Commission reported that during year 104,000 acres were divided among 7,700 holders. At Housing Enquiry, Dublin's Lord Mayor said he believed building was being delayed by persons waiting for rise in prices of materials. Dublin Corporation will erect huts on housing sites for slum-dwellers pending building of houses. Government arranged omnibus transport to city schools for children in new housing areas; stated that some children had not been to school for two years. Land Trust will resume building of houses for British ex-servicemen. Government cheap beef scheme discontinued. Inspector stated new Clean Milk Acts would not drive small men out of business. Stated at Dublin Dental Hospital that progress of school dental service was unsatisfactory. Rioghacht lecturer suggested free cottages for newly-married couples. Resolution at Dublin Board of Assistance against employment of married women defeated. Bishop of Waterford opposed innovation of Sunday cinema.

Casement's reputation was safe in the affections of the Irish people, said President, when asked in Dail if he would raise with British Government the authenticity of the "diaries." Grand National Hospitals Sweep prize fund of £1,662,000 showed increase of £162,000 over last year; hospitals will receive £512,000. T.C.D. Historical Society passed motion of full confidence in Government. Stated at Derry that hospital at Ballyrattan built 15 years had never had a patient. Appeal against binding to the peace for distributing literature "scandalously offensive to Catholicism" dismissed.

Turf, already the second largest crop, was expected soon to be produced in large quantities cheaper than coal, said Dr. Henry Kennedy. Minister for Industry and Commerce said the turf industry was being encouraged because if successful it would solve 90 per cent. of economic problems. Saorstát external trade last year was £62,516,000, an increase of nearly £5,000,000 over previous year. There was no cause for alarm or pessimism, said G.S.Rly. chairman at annual meeting; revenue increased by £225,000. New trade agreement with Britain removed tariff on Saorstát horses; Swiss army buyer said: "We can find nothing to equal Irish horses in any part of the world." Government policy had increased trade on the canals, said Grand Canal Company's chairman at annual meeting. Government's aim was to make the Saorstát an international air junction, said Minister for Industry and Commerce, announcing new air transport company. British flying boat tested at Foynes for transatlantic service. Increased entries at R.U.A.S. show and R.D.S. bullshow. 100 Representatives of guilds attend Irish Countrywomen's Association meeting. Reported to Cork Industrial Association that there was little future for handicrafts until designs were improved. New £93,000 college of domestic science to be erected in Cathal Brugha Street, Dublin.

Government's policy for Irish vigorously defended by Tomas O Deirig in Dail, and motion that methods be "reconsidered and rationalised" was defeated. At Feis Atha Cliath he said Irish music was second only to the language. Inter-university debate in Irish at Queen's University, Belfast. Exhibition in Dublin of paintings by Sean Dixon. Many Irish pictures in London exhibition by Frank Eggington. Prof. M. Hardie delivered Hermione lectures at Alexandra College. Eric Gill lectured to the Architectural Association on "Sculpture on machine-made buildings." Students Union of Queen's University ban lecture on Spain by Peadar O'Donnell. Woman Writer's Club divide prize for best book of year between Helen Waddell and Edna FitzHenry. 1,320 entries, including 150 from Saorstát, for Belfast Musical Festival. Irish committee formed to help church memorial to G. K. Chesterton. Count John McCormack presents statue of Lincoln to Saorstát Government. Evangelists celebrate Centenary of Moody, who visited Dublin. Meeting of Northern Youth Hostel Association attended by An Oige representative. Roadside Tree Association plant trees on Stillorgan Road. Representative of Hungarian students visited Ireland to arrange for reciprocal tours. There were only six folk storytellers left in Ireland, said Seamus O Duilearga lecturing to Irish Women's Citizens' Association. After lively debate Dail passes by 77 votes to 50 the Spanish War Non-Intervention bill; Sean MacEntee at Fianna Fail convention referred to the "Irish Civil War in Spain" and said Gen. O'Duffy had hoped to return with new fascist army. Irish casualties on both sides in Spain. Saorstát



## THE MONTH IN RETROSPECT

attitude to Coronation of George VI must be one of detachment and protest while the country was partitioned, declared President in Dail. British coal representatives confer with Government in Dublin on price and quality of coal imported under quota for Britain. There would be no compromise on his side in the "economic war," said President in Dail; "We have survived the attack intended to destroy us," said Minister for Industry and Commerce. Increase in British army establishment in Northern Ireland.

Died: J. J. McCarroll, M.P., editor of *Derry Journal*; P. J. Doris, Mayo editor and veteran nationalist; Henry Dobbyn, Belfast I.R.A. veteran; Joseph Giusani, well-known Cork doctor; Patrick Maughan, king of "gipsy" clan.

Floods and snowstorms along eastern coast. Supreme court reversed judgment that "bona fide" travellers must be in *in itinere*. Court accepts offer of Donegal man accused of possession of poteen to reveal still if not imprisoned. At Belfast jury went home undetected at lunch interval and had to be discharged. Court awarded £1,600 to boy whose eye was accidentally splashed with iodine by doctor. Desmond Rushton lecturing on Publicity to Dublin Rotary told how Kreuger increased sales by inventing superstition that it was unlucky to light three cigarettes with one match. Assistance officer reported to Roscommon local authority that people would not assist in burial of aged destitute man and bargained in churchyard over price for digging grave. Distinctions at cookery classes between "maids" and "bourgeoisie cooks" condemned at Castlerea vocational Committee. There was no more offensive sight than an Irish colleen gyrating to American music under the influence of English gin and French vermouth, said President of Vintners' Association.

DENIS BARRY

## AMONGST OUR CONTRIBUTORS TO DATE ARE THE FOLLOWING:—

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The future holds no less brilliant and representative a company and always too our poems and short story and usual features: Foreign Commentary, Art, Music, Theatre, Film and Book Section, conducted respectively by MICHAEL O'NEILL-KING, JOHN DOWLING, EAMONN O GALLCOBHAIR, SEAN O MEADHRA, LIAM O LAOGHAIRE and EDWARD SHEEHY.